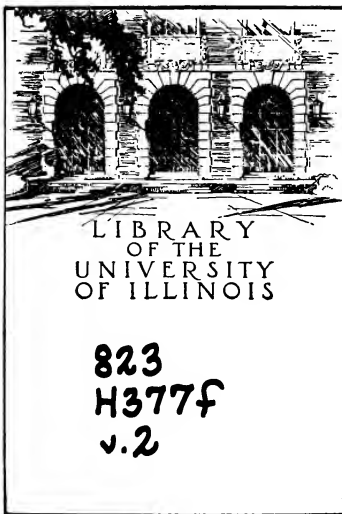


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FREIDA THE JONGLEUR.

Mary E. R. Carter.

BY

BARBARA HEMPHILL,

AUTHOR OF "LIONEL DEERHURST; OR, FASHIONABLE LIFE UNDER THE
REGENCY." "THE PRIEST'S NIECE; OR, HEIRSHIP OF BARNULPH,"
ETC. ETC.

"Whither my younger feet wandered, I betook me among those
lofty fables and romances which recount the deeds of chivalry."—
MILTON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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FREIDA THE JONGLEUR.

CHAPTER I.

“Withdrawn she spoke, ‘I know thee well—
Me, too, thou needst must know :’ the subtle spy
Felt his heart fail him.” — WIFFIN’S *Tasso*.

WE now return to the banqueting-hall, where the guests, relieved from the presence of their offended king, whose grave deportment and moral conduct was a reproof to their licentiousness, indulged freely in their wassail. Several of them forming into parties, in low whispers carried on their schemes and hopes of stirring up rebellion ; the most vehement of these incendiaries were Gaultier, bishop of Longris, and his nephew Sir Foulque. Having ventured to speak out their opinions too freely, some of the Royalists took them up, violent disputation ensued,

when it was interrupted by a flourish of trumpets. On the instant, a wide portal at the eastern end of the hall was thrown open, and two of the Queen's damoiseaux, boys of exquisite beauty, being clad in green and gold after the fashion of Roman pages of that period, entered ; and, with striding steps and well-assumed looks of ferocity, truly ludicrous in children not ten years of age, drawing out tiny foils, performed a warlike combat. This mimic duel of the children so amused the barons that they forgot their disputation. The combat being concluded, the tallest page sounded a small silver trumpet suspended to his neck to command attention, after which, in loud grave accents, he said, that as herald of her most gracious Majesty, Jane D'Artois, he came to announce that a Bavarian knight, by name Rhodolphe Visconti, a stranger to France, had volunteered to hunt the wild wolves until each monster was destroyed, and that, for the honour of France and its chivalry, her Majesty hoped and expected that they would not cast such a reflection upon the gallantry and humanity of the French as to permit a stranger to

usurp the honour of conquering the monsters. Then with a reverence the page cast down a small glove embroidered with pearls and gold thread, the pattern a *fleur-de-lis* beneath a crown.

Charmed with the boys' acting, the nobles presented them with confectionary and sweet wine. Another flourish of trumpets, intermingled with laughter, was heard; and, glancing through the open portal, bright eyes shone forth from beneath silken capucins, and tapered fingers, sparkling with gems, beckoned to the pages, who in obedience bounded towards them; then the entrance was quickly closed. Some of the knights arose in glee to follow; but Longris, as her Majesty's confessor, gravely interfered, remarking,—

“Her Majesty, attended by the damsels in waiting, oft amuses herself with these sports; but none, I presume, dare interfere with her pleasure; it were uncourteous, and would be followed by dismissal from the Court. That lady in the green and gold capucin was Lady Agatha D'Abeis, for whose hand this Rhodolphe is to enter

into combat with my nephew, Sir Foulque. No doubt to win her favour, the Bavarian volunteers this dangerous service. It shames us of France, that presuming on the rights of a fief not yet won, this knight should adopt a course of danger and honour which as yet we have supinely neglected. Now I propose that all here unite in the scheme of destroying the monsters."

Simultaneously the guests started up and vociferated their willingness; then deep goblets were quaffed, and a loud clash of arms followed: but of all the party Foulque was most vehement, being mad to distinguish himself over his rival for the hand of Agatha D'Abeis.

Among the company was Sir Almeric, the Knight Templar who, at Acre, had first introduced the Jongleurs to Guy D'Auvergne. Sir Almeric was lord of Marne, had always been pious and true to his knightly vows, still at the period of the Templars' trial, he had been put to the rack, ultimately his life had been saved; but torture had reduced his strength and shaken his nervous system. He now appeared an

old decrepit man, solely resigned to superstition ; indeed, nothing was too preposterous for his belief. He had only just returned from the neighbourhood of the Ardennes, and gave a fearful description of the wolves' depredations.

"And wherefore," demanded Gaultier, "have no efforts been made by the northern barons to exterminate such an evil?"

The lord of Marne stepped forward, and, in a solemn mysterious tone, whispered,—

"Learn the cause. Several of our most pious monks assert that human means for their destruction would prove vain ; for the wolves are headed by a fiend or war-wolf, and this it is which perpetrates such destruction. Nightly, as in troops the famishing monsters rush down from the Ardennes, one of a larger size and of uncurbed ferocity takes the lead, and, strange to say, never devours the victim, leaving the prey to the inferior monsters. O Christ! it is awful." He shuddered, crossed himself, muttering a credo.

Though incredulous as to the possibility

of the war-wolf, Longris resolved to circulate the belief, and now observed,—

“If this be so, Almeric of Marne, this Rhodolphe has little chance of putting his intentions into execution ;—a boaster I conclude this Bavarian to be.”

Looking still more mysterious, the lord of Marne said,—“You, Gaultier of Longris, the chief witness against Guy D’Auvergne for having tampered in sorcery, will readily admit my suggestion. This Rhodolphe had reached his manhood ere the Templars were burned, and no doubt, having been the constant companion of his father, from him learned the arts of magic. May God assoil our spirits! But since Philip le Bel and Clement were carried off at the very period the Grand Master summoned them to appear before the throne of God, no one can doubt the preternatural powers invested in some men. Gaultier, when a person appears officiously benevolent and humane—such virtues being rare—it creates suspicions. I have my doubts ;”—and off went Sir Almeric to whisper his suspicions and

doubts to every one whose attention he could command.

“Foulque,” said the bishop, after acquainting him with the Lord of Marne’s account of the war-wolf, “this is a strange report. My belief in preternatural powers has been shaken,—I may say eradicated, since my residence in Greece, most parts of which I have visited, and became intimate with several Greek priests, men of profound learning, but great disputants to show off their rhetoric, a talent upon which they justly pride themselves. Thus I have improved my knowledge by listening to their controversies of whether their mysteries and sciences were first introduced into Greece by the Phenicians or Egyptians; and in these disquisitions the arts which by the ignorant were imputed to magic were discussed. Still there was, and is much that even those priests could not account for by natural means. However, more to our purpose: in the event of Rhodolphe succeeding in exterminating the wolves, he will be elevated in the scale of society; for no matter how corrupt or stolid the multitude, the man who

benefits his species is venerated : it was ever so, and ever must be. Women in particular are attracted by feats of gallantry. Now see our staff to rest upon ; if Rhodolphe succeeds, we stand forward and accuse him of practising sorcery under the influence of the war-wolf ; the crime of the parent is readily affixed to his offspring, and with the Bavarian's condemnation every obstacle to your union with Agatha D'Abeis would be removed."

"A priestly ruse !" brusquely replied Sir Foulque ; "no, my pious uncle ; in place of trying the prowess of my good sword, you would have me summon the devil to my aid. Have you been keeping his sabbath ?—I suspect you have. Now for me I prefer bold measures to ghostly assistance ; both to our vocation, pious uncle ; you war against spirit, and I against the flesh. Come, no anger ; drink this goblet to my success."

Ere Longris answered, another flourish of arms resounded through the hall, the damoiseaux entered, bearing a message from her Majesty, commanding the company of several of the barons and knights to attend a masque

to be performed that night in her apartments in honour of St. James' festival. Those nominated gaily sprang up to prepare for the honour, while of those who had not been included, some indignantly left the banqueting-hall, others collected in groups to pour out their disappointment in angry words against the reigning powers. None, however, felt so keenly mortified as Gaultier, bishop of Longris, at having been excluded from an entertainment where he had a right to be the first invited. To disguise his anger and mortification, he retired from the Louvre, moving through the trains of royal attendants who lined the passages, scattering small pieces of gold among them. On reaching his horse he dismissed the groom, threw a large mantle over his person, and desiring a varlet to follow in the distance, proceeded through the solitary streets; for of the multitudes who had hailed the sun's glorious appearance all had disappeared, save a few houseless poor, who nightly stretched for repose across the barriers, oft sleeping soundly on their iron beds while royalty tossed its fevered frame on silken couches.

Gaultier proceeded to a place called the Pilgrim's Rest, being a building erected by Louis IX. for the accommodation of wayfarers going to, or returning from, holy Palestine.

It consisted of a long building of the rudest description, rendered fantastic by grotesque figures of Faith, of Hope, and of Charity; and over the door was a three-armed black Madonna, supposed to be emblematical of the mysterious Trinity; from the four cardinal points were arched entrances through which all might enter.

At one period the Pilgrim's Rest had been frequented by princes, nobles, knights and ladies of high degree, as well as by the humbler classes; and it was their pride and charity to lay down gifts of money, clothing, &c. for the poorer pilgrims: but after some years, the Rest became less frequented by the Court; and, except in disguise, ladies never entered within its portals, in consequence of its having become a rendezvous to carry on political or love intrigues. Still it was seldom without company.

On reaching the eastern entrance Gaultier alighted. His varlet had not arrived, so, gently patting the crest of his noble steed, he intimated to it to stand ; the steed seemed to comprehend, for it rubbed its nose against the Bishop's shoulders and remained quiet, while he paced up and down a path leading to the river. Without all was silent, but from the Pilgrim's Rest issued forth the various sounds of prayer, of chanting, of disputation, of gossip. The moon, at her full, ranged quietly above, each object beneath visible in her refulgent light ; the air blew soft, though fresh ; and now from the river-side rose the first verse of a vesper hymn, sung by a voice of great depth and exquisite harmony. The Bishop, passionately fond of music, paused to catch every note ; on the instant the woman he had before seen in widow's weeds, rushed from the Rest, and looked anxiously around, but the voice had ceased, even its echo died away ; she groaned aloud, clasped her hands, then, perceiving Gaultier, sprang towards his steed, caught its bridle, and with rapid pace led it to the water's edge.

Surprised, alarmed, he rushed after, ex-

claiming, "Woman, what mean you? would you steal my good steed?"

"Patience!" she replied; "I would speak to you, Gaultier of Longris, — there is no evil intent against the good steed."

By this time he stood near to her, and then he recognised the person who near to Nôtre Dame had given him the vellum with its mysterious scroll.

She stood in the beaming light; her form, rather above the middle size, was graceful; nor was the dress unbecoming. It consisted of black serge, over which was a dark mantle, edged with fine fur called "gris and gros;" her neck was encompassed by a gorget of Egyptian linen; and to the girdle, in place of rosary or cross, was hung a large scrip; a hood drawn over the face disguised its expression.

"Woman, how dared you?" cried Longris snatching the bridle from her hand.

"Thus, I answer," she exclaimed; in hastily drawing down her hood the wimple also fell, and, though shaded by luxuriant hair which fell far below her knees, Freida the Jongleur stood confessed, the outline of

her features still beautiful; the ravages of time being imperceptible in the moon's soft refulgence.

It were impossible to follow up the feelings of Gaultier. There stood Freida, the preserver of his life, and for a period the beloved of his soul! Crimes of the darkest hue had since been imputed to her; her being seemed involved in mystery and sin; was this their meeting for good or evil? He shuddered and leant against his horse.

"Nazarene priest!" angrily exclaimed Freida, "am I forgotten? and yet who in this faded form could recognise the Freida of the past?" she sighed, handed a stiletto, observing, "Gaultier, let this remind you of the siege of Acre, and our parting at Mount Carmel."

He took her hand, and said, "Freida, on the first glance I remembered you—still beautiful."

"Oh, no, no!" she interrupted impatiently, "Time, and still more potent destroyer Sorrow, has faded all but this;" (she dashed off her flowing hair), "and which, by a Saxon habit, I am bound to preserve. You are

deceived by the night's deceptive light ; I am pale, withered, miserable, all but mad—a deep consuming grief preys on my vitals ; but the Fates have ordained that I shall live to perpetrate my revenge, and to which, by the rites of my persecuted race, I am bound. I dare not relent, if my heart so wished,—nay, if this faded form was consumed by the flames of persecution to which it has been doomed, my spirit would rise again to perform its office of vengeance !”

Crossing himself, Gaultier muttered, “Blessed Mary, protect me ! this Pagan is mad. Here, Freida, is money. I must now depart.”

She cast it back, exclaiming, “To me wealth is dross, and of gold I have abundance. What I want is your assistance, for the power as the Queen’s confessor rests with you. Nay, listen to the reward—aid my cause, and, Gaultier, I not only can relieve your embarrassment, but enable you to live in luxury. Nay, more, Sir Foulque shall be heir to the broad lands of the D’Evreux, and at pleasure wed Agatha D’Abeis. Such is your guerdon. My reward the blood

of my enemies!"—her face was flushed, she quivered with excitement.

"She is surely mad!" he reflected; then aloud, "How could you, a Jongleur—a vagrant—whose life is forfeited to the laws of France, perform deeds beyond the power of Charles de Valois? Freida, be advised, quit Paris, else if discovered, you perish on the gibbet of Montfaucon."

She shrieked "Montfaucon!" covered her face with her hands, then wept aloud.

"Farewell, Freida," said Gaultier; "I feel for and pity you,—farewell;" he was mounting his horse.

"Nay, you must hear me," she cried, grasping his feet: "meet me early next Friday evening,—it is a day sacred to the Jongleurs,—in the laurel grove which branches off from the ruined arches of Julian the Apostate's Baths. In that unholy place none will intrude; and there, however painful the retrospect, you shall hear the events of my life, and will then be convinced of my power to perform all I have promised. Nay, more, you shall learn where the Count de Valois now is. Refuse, and ere three months Bona Clisson

shall be mistress of D'Evreux Castle and its broad lands ; Agatha D'Abeis the bride of Rhodolphe Visconti ; and you, Gaultier, exiled from your country for having expended the revenues intrusted to your care by the defunct Baron. I now leave you. Remember, Friday afternoon next, in the laurel grove. One assurance I give, that in aiding you I shall use no sorcery. Farewell !”

She hastened away by the path leading to the Seine, while Longris rode off to his hotel at a rapid pace.

This meeting with Freida, after so many years of separation, deeply affected Gaultier. He hesitated to grant the desired interview to one whom he deemed demented, and towards whom he experienced no gleams of the passion for which at one period he would have risked his immortal soul ; but though love no longer influenced, curiosity and hope of relief did ; and when early on Thursday morning Sir Foulque joined the gallant company who left Paris for the wolf-hunting, he decided upon keeping the appointment.

Freida found shelter in the ruins of a castle situated close to the Baths, and which,

owing to some superstition, had been neglected : indeed, the whole immediate neighbourhood was held in evil repute as being near the Apostate's Baths. Yet to the antiquarian there was much for inquiry and interest ; among others, a noble statue of Apollo was elevated on a height in the centre of a sacred grove of laurels.

Friday afternoon, not expecting Longris so early, the Jongleur performed some sacred rite of her idolatrous race. There was something sad to her sensitive heart as she reflected on the earnestness and enthusiasm with which during her girlish days she had pursued these devotions.

“Alas !” she sighed, “ the outward form, the visible signs are the same ; but the faith and hope which once inspired me are gone — flown ! Oh ! this moral death to what I once considered sublime, is fearful.”

Even while thus reflecting, she performed the rite by striking a dagger into the centre of the elevation. She then sought for a branch of white-leaved laurel, arranged a circle of dried laurel leaves and boughs, prostrated herself for some moments, when,

springing up, she ignited the circle, and, as it blazed and crackled, drew forth a wand and went dancing and flourishing it around. As she performed this strange orgia Gaultier entered. Anger conquered fear as he exclaimed, passionately,—

“Vile Jongleur! dare you summon me here to witness devilish incantations? it may be to work some enchantment on myself. When I entered the Apostate’s unholy ground I deserved to be punished.”

He was hastening away, but, with a bound clearing the burning circle, she grasped his arm and said,

“You are right, it is but an idle invention of an imaginative people; there is no holiness, no truth in it. But, Gaultier, rest you here,”—she gently placed him on the fragment of a broken column,—“for I have much to tell connected with your prospects. But you look pale—exhausted. This rite has alarmed you—here, drink.”

She poured from a flask into a crystal goblet some wine, tasted a few drops, then presented it. Having drunk, he laid down the goblet, and with a sigh observed, “The

same delicious draught as you presented to me at Mount Carmel, Freida."

"Yes," she replied, "old Hungarian wine of the richest grape. I fear, Gaultier, my tale may prove tedious if I commence from the period of our parting at Mount Carmel."

"The evening is still young ; and as I have ventured here, I would gladly learn every event of your life ; it must, I think, have been one of adventure and interest ; so commence, I shall listen attentively—here, rest near me, Freida." He clasped her hand in his.

She returned the flask and goblet into her scrip, sat down near Gaultier, and then said,—

"Yes, you shall know all, Sir Deacon, even though the recapitulation of my persecutions revives every agony ; but revenge shall shield me against the tortures of memory and description. Mine is a sad tale, Gaultier."

CHAPTER II.

“In winter’s tedious nights, sit by the fire
With good old folks ; and let them tell thee tales
Of woeful ages long ago betide :
And ere thou bid good night, to quit their grief,
Tell them the lamentable fall of me,
And send the hearers weeping to their beds,
For why the senseless brands will sympathise
The heavy accent of thy moving tongue,
And in compassion weep the fire out.”

SHAKESPEARE.

“GAULTIER, on leaving you at Mount Carmel, I rode swiftly back to a cave where Guy D’Auvergne was lodged ; his name is no longer a secret, and happily he has long been secured in the silent tomb from the persecutions of his enemies. You may remember that I mentioned having conveyed much of the treasures of the Templars, that were secreted in their Convent, to the retreat

of my Knight. Subsequently I succeeded in securing the remaining part ; after which, with D'Auvergne, I went to Cyprus, where we resided in a noble palace ; these were the brightest days of my chequered existence. The Templar, exhausted from the violence of his sufferings and many wounds, continued delicate. Thus repose, for the time being, suited him best ; and in Cyprus he was surrounded by friends.

“About six years subsequent to the siege of Acre, my happiness seemed perfected by the birth of a son ; it, however, received some alloy, by discovering, that, in place of sympathising in my delight, the Templar was annoyed,—nay, grieved. He was startled and terrified at being the father of a Pagan's child, it roused him to a consciousness of the crime he had committed. To relieve his anxiety, I proposed that at Christmas—it was then May—with the infant I would be baptized into the Christian religion. I selected Christmas, it being the season when I had first met D'Auvergne. He received this intelligence with less pleasure than I had anticipated,

but to me it was a source of delight. And I indulged in dreams of divinity, which I shall not now repeat, as circumstances prevented their realisation.

“ We had many wayfarers from Europe constantly coming to Cyprus. Engaged with my infant, I paid no particular attention to a pilgrim who, for some months, had frequently come to our palace ; and yet he had all this time been negotiating between the Templar and Beatrix ; and I afterwards learned, that by a combination of interests, some of affection, others of policy, D’Auvergne’s union with Beatrix was acknowledged by the mutual friends of both parties. Nay, even the Duke of Bavaria, to win over the Red-Cross Knights to aid the Ghibelline faction against the Guelfs, overlooking the Templar’s broken vow of chastity, won over his Holiness Boniface—ever lenient in matters of love—to legalise the union and its only fruit, Rhodolphe. The Prince of Dauphiny also, not only gave his sanction, but received Beatrix and her son with brotherly affection ; and an express was sent off to Cyprus to acquaint D’Auvergne of this favourable

change, and to request his immediate return to Europe, where at the palace of Munich, Beatrix, with unfaded beauty and unchanged affection, impatiently awaited his presence.

“And now all my heroism, my truth, my devotion to his interest, and the long months of patient solitude during which I had nursed his wounds, and gently borne the caprices of his temper, rendered irritable, nay, sometimes furious as he reflected on the Christians’ defeat, and fancied his hand might have saved Acre, were forgotten, or it might be despised, by the Templar in the rapturous prospect of being reunited to Beatrix,—that fair being with whom his pride, his interest, the heir of his wealth, were amalgamated. What, indeed, could the Saxon glee-girl offer in compensation to withhold him from the proud Christian, the descendant of princes? So he whom I had so passionately loved, so tenderly pleased, treated me as a bondswoman; and as the Patriarch of old cast out Hagar and her child, so were I and my son, my beautiful Edrid, left to wander alone through life’s sad

wilderness, deserted by him who should have protected us.

“On the first announcement of D’Auvergne’s proposed separation from me and departure for Europe, my affliction found utterance in frantic accusations and reproaches ; their only effect was to irritate his haughty temper. Then my grief, from mere exhaustion, sank into remonstrances and entreaties, equally unsuccessful in their results ; but it is wearisome thus to dwell upon love’s various resources until hope vanishes ; soon it faded from my bosom, for D’Auvergne admitted that he had merely taken me to his arms as a solace for Beatrix’s absence.

“This acknowledgment, breathing such a spirit of libertinism and selfishness, roused my indignation. I despised myself for clinging to an object so void of lofty sentiments, as to take me, a child in years, from my natural protectors, and the wild life I then loved, merely as a pastime, indifferent to my fate. Pagan as I was, I could not have acted thus basely. These reflections helped to support me in the hour of separation ; and happily in after years taught me to deplore with less

bitterness the knight's horrible death;—gods of my fathers ! else I could not have survived his agonies.

“The Templar acted nobly in providing for my future wants,—I may say luxuries. True he made an effort to take from me my son, whom he wished to have baptized and educated in the Christian faith ; but on witnessing my despair, his heart was softened, and he at length yielded the child to my sole care. This was a noble act, for it was not only a sacrifice to part from the boy to whom he was tenderly attached, but every prejudice and principle of his soul was in favour of Christianity. For I solemnly assert that though the Templars were licentious in their pleasures, and proud to the last degree, they were Christians in faith ; the Cross, the symbol of redemption, was sacred to them. And while I admit that to the gratification of a vain curiosity, D'Auvergne and some few more of the Red-Cross Knights have oft led me to explain, and in their presence to perform, some of the idolatrous rites of my ancient people, it was as a pastime ; and subsequently I was sternly

prohibited ever again, while residing within the sanctuary of their Convent, to perform offices which they deemed impious and unholy."

"If," interrupted Longris, "you had, as you have just now asserted, for some time been influenced by the Christian faith, why persist in your idolatry?"

She replied with bitterness, "I offered to be baptized if D'Auvergne continued with me, but even this was rejected; and then and from henceforth I eschewed his faith; false to me in all things, I renounced him, even to his creed. But, Gaultier, these questions are vain; I cannot, will not trace the wanderings of my spirit. The human mind in its self-deception is anomalous; and if you reflect that until my fifteenth year, I had been taught to consider the Christians as my natural enemies, and brought to witness their cruelty on many a human victim, you will cease to wonder that I hesitated to adopt their faith.

"I shall pass over my parting from D'Auvergne; and though then at liberty to return to the Jongleurs, I preferred continuing in the luxurious climate of Palestine, and chose my residence at Jaffa; in a palace which

previous to the last Crusade had belonged to a Pasha. It was situated at the eastern side of the town, and the height upon which it was erected sloped down to the Mediterranean, and was broken and diversified by undulations, sometimes abruptly starting up into rocky knolls clothed with heaths, stone-crops and beautiful lilies, peculiar to the place; their varied tints pleasingly relieved by the soft verdure of the level ground, planted with groves of olives, lemon and orange-trees; the whole refreshed by sparkling fountains, supplied from a marble aqueduct, which conducted the pellucid waters of the small river which lies near Jaffa; and, Gaultier, all within my palace, was in keeping with these delicious grounds."

"How generously the Templar must have acted to enable you to support such splendour!" interrupted Longris.

"He scattered his gold liberally," she replied, with bitterness, "when he withdrew his affection and protection from me, but the chief source of my wealth sprang from another cause.

"You are, I conclude, aware that the

Convents of the Templars were ever open to the stranger and wayfarer, and that their hospitalities were carried on in the most magnificent style.

“ While staying at Cyprus, an old Persian prince, who had fled from Schiras, to escape the bowstring of his nephew, impatient for his wealth, on reaching Greece, demanded D’Auvergne’s protection. It was immediately granted ; and as the Persian was ignorant of the European languages, but perfect master of the Hebrew and Syriac, both of which I understood, I acted as interpreter between him and the Knights. This awakened his gratitude, which gradually, from my kind attention to his infirmities, for his health was delicate, grew into a sincere friendship.

“ To be brief, by one of the frequent and rapid changes which occur in Persian politics, the Prince’s nephew was beheaded, and he recalled from Palestine to fill his throne ; but his country had forfeited his respect and confidence ; so amassing as much of his wealth as consisted in gold and jewels, he secretly fled from Schiras to

Jaffa, and took up his residence in my palace, where we were soon after joined by the Moslem freemason, who at the siege of Acre had aided me in removing my Templar to the cavern on the shores of the Levant, and by which means alone I could have preserved D'Auvergne's life. The protection of the Moslem and Persian was absolutely necessary, from the licentiousness then reigning in Jaffa; the former aided me by his counsels, and the scymitar of the latter would have dealt its certain and deadly blow to any who dared to molest me. Thus I was enabled to reject the advances of many a proud Knight who else would have accepted no denial. My love for the Templar had been too sincere, too pure, and ardent, ever to yield to a second passion; while his inconstancy to the dame Beatrix, and his selfish desertion of me and his child taught me to view his whole sex with suspicion and contempt. The wounds inflicted on our affections by those we love never heal, but, rankling in our tortured bosoms, generate a misanthropy which casts its cold doubts over humanity. Oh, this want of confidence in

the sympathy of those who surround us is sad in the extreme.

“By the Persian’s advice, to secure safety by popularity and numbers,—for scarcely a night passed in Jaffa unmarked by scenes of rapine, violence, and murder, the perpetrators of which were rarely discovered,—I threw my lofty halls open to receive strangers of distinction, making no difference between their country or religion. My hospitality was on a noble scale, and my knowledge of so many languages enabled me to converse freely with men of almost every nation, who were charmed at finding one so intimately acquainted with the manners and resources of their several countries. Soon, and the fame of my festivities were proclaimed throughout Christendom by the flattering voices of Bard and Troubadour ; and many a warrior came from distant lands to see the lovely Queen of Jaffa,—such was the proud title by which I was greeted in Palestine. And once Khalil, the haughty conqueror of the Christians, graced my board by his presence ; and he would have repeated the offers of gallantry which he had first addressed to

me in the fortified Convent of the Templars. I repulsed his addresses sternly, but claimed the ties of brotherhood and protection ; and both were freely granted by the generous Sultan. And much were they required, for the pure spirit of chivalry had yielded to a free-booting system in Jaffa ; indeed, the East in general was crowded with desperadoes, and there was no safety except for those who found shelter in Jerusalem, which was still held sacred. This lessened the respectability, if not the number, of my guests, among whom I counted Turks, Jews, Armenians, Christians. Proudly I *received* them, for pride, the pride of state and power, filled the place of love in my bosom : not the Egyptian queen, when the proud conqueror Anthony bowed in submission to her will, was more haughty, more imperious. Still, I deemed myself virtuous, because my life was pure, and my disposition being generous and benevolent, out of my abundance I performed many noble acts of charity. In this pandemonium of pride, my fair boy seemed to hover like a seraph of light and love ; the tenderness with which my libertine compa-

nions regarded him, proved that virtue is seldom entirely extinguished in the human breast. It was curious to see the smiling child fondled in the arms of some grave Turk, whose heart, yielding, perhaps for the first time, to woman's tenderness, would open the folds of his garment, and lay Edrid gently on his bosom to rest; or in playful mood, the boy would twist his rosy fingers in some Jew's long beard, while the descendant of Israel, forgetting his wonted austerity, would play a thousand tricks for his amusement; nay, even the lost Christians, as they gazed on his cherub face, forgetting their apostasy, would call on the Virgin to guard and protect my boy. Still better pleased was the bright child, when some light Saracen, placing him in front of his Arab steed, would gallop with him over the sands. And this admired being was mine, and mine solely! The intense love of our offspring, so remarkable in our wild people, glowed in my bosom with treble force, when Edrid,—so I called him, for, like all the initiated of the Saxon Jongleurs, I highly esteemed the country from which we had derived our

title, and it was not advisable to call the children of the Templars after their fathers, as in all things they strove to avoid the scandal of having infringed on their vows of chastity,—when Edrid had nearly attained his ninth year, some of our tribe who were going to Germany to join the Jongleurs, prevailed upon me to accompany them thither. My mind was beginning to get restless, not from quiet, for I seldom remained in my splendid home near Jaffa;—far from it, I had been to Damascus, and travelled through most parts of Syria; but the time I had spent with the Templar had helped to civilise my feelings; and my increase of learning, for my passion for reading resisted the influence of love and of time, as I have just now remarked, rendered me dissatisfied, nay, even disgusted, with my associates, and, moreover, with myself; all this, the experience of the Amazonian had foreseen, and would have guarded against. How often, in the bitterness of my soul, have I not cursed the disobedience which led me to pursue studies which, elevating me above my nature, my position, or my *conduct*,

awakened in my soul a tumult of fears, hopes, and doubts, which I have never been able to satisfy. Understanding that the Saxon Jongleurs were encamped on the banks of the Aa, near Munster, accompanied by Edrid I proceeded thither, and the horde greeted me with pleasure.

“ I found my Saxon parent much altered in strength and spirits, though still lording over the company with a leader’s authority. She and Jacques de Lor were then living tranquilly, though not happily, together ; he still pursued the study of the occult sciences, and she no longer disturbed his quiet by useless struggles. Independent of having from my own experience discovered the justness of her opinions, the strange manner of Jacques would have convinced me of the danger of his pursuits. Like his mother, his figure rose above the usual size ; but while she was fair in complexion, and with rich amber-coloured hair, he was dark, his features, though finely formed, were all too large for beauty ; and as he advanced to manhood, his air was mysterious, his manners absent, and his countenance sad and

gloomy ; and this was increased by his mode of dressing ; he always appeared in a suit of black, with a long, flowing mantle of the same colour, painted round the edge with a variety of hieroglyphics ; his dark hair, divided on his forehead, fell down his shoulders and back in soft waves which a youthful maiden might have envied. He had always loved me ; and now, on my rejoining him, his affections increased. He was charmed with my boy, and amused with the account I gave of the various countries I had visited, observing, however, that they all fell short of Egypt, where he pressed me to accompany him, but this I declined.

“ Gaultier, as well as I now can recollect, I had been but a few weeks in Munster, when an account reached me of the persecutions commenced against the pre-doomed Templars ! Guess my horror on learning that Guy D’Auvergne’s intimacy with me, a Pagan, and supposed to be a sorcerer, was the principal crime proved against them, though hundreds were alleged, and that you were the witness brought forward to

criminate them and me. Language must fail to depict my grief, anger, and indignation at the intelligence ; my first impulse was to fly to Paris, and far as I could to exonerate D'Auvergne, and criminate you as a false Priest and Knight ; but my Saxon parent represented to me how the lady Beatrix was with the Templar ; consequently that my visit there would be embarrassing, also that his having lived with me, a Jongleur, was sufficient in itself to condemn him to the flames ; that I well knew the Free Companions indulged in many pleasures forbidden by their vows, and that I would be pressed, bribed, nay, tortured, to give evidence against them ; and that not only they, but the Jongleurs and myself, would be involved in much misery. To avoid which she advised me to hasten with Jacques, and join some of the tribes in Egypt or Hindostan. Though my short sojourn in Germany had been congenial to all my earlier habits, yielding to her reasoning I did not hesitate to take the advice in quitting Europe, but preferred returning to Jaffa ;

several of the party accompanied me to the sea-coast ; there, meeting a vessel bound for Smyrna, I took shipping, resolving to make some stay in that celebrated city, and then at my pleasure proceed to Jaffa.

CHAPTER III.

“ This one, this easy charge, of all the tree,
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste the only tree
Of knowledge.”—MILTON.

“ ONCE more in my palace I resumed my habits of hospitality and extravagance, for both my means were fully competent. As yet I had never experienced the privations or anxieties of limited means. At this period, though wherefore I knew not, the Jongleur tribes deserted Palestine, not one remained. Of the many distinguished guests who crowded my halls, none awakened in me a sentiment of respect or friendship; but my esteem for the Persian prince and the Moslem knew no diminution. The latter was far advanced in years, the former had ever experienced delicate health. This I

regretted, but every other sentiment paled in comparison to my ardent love for Edrid, sole pledge of the Templar's attachment, and to whom my resentment vanished as I dwelt on his terrible fate, which at this period I first learned.

“Years rolled on unmarked by events of importance, but the affection of Edrid daily increased; he loved me with enthusiasm. When I decked myself to take my proud place, his countenance brightened with pleasure, and his unsophisticated expressions of admiration afforded me more pleasure than the admiration of Khalil or the flattery of princes and nobles. If illness attacked me, Edrid never quitted my pillow, administering restoratives and whispering words of tenderness; and this bright boy was mine,—solely mine, and I had wealth to pour out every luxury for his enjoyment, and power to uphold his position among the chiefs of any land I chose to visit; and my heart swelled with pride, and in its indulgence my bearing grew more erect, my step more firm; and the germ of this pride was Edrid,—my beautiful son, for though for his years of rather low

stature and slight frame, there was nothing feminine or unmeaning in his countenance of classical proportions and intellectual expression.

“I had witnessed the dissolute manners of many of the Templars, and the low subterfuges to which their haughty spirits were obliged to succumb, lest the Grand Master or the truly pious of the brotherhood should discover their peccadilloes ; and pride taught me to guard my son from vice and its humiliations ; consequently he never was permitted to mix with any of my visitors except those that the Persian approved, for he from affection acted as Edrid’s tutor.

“Few can escape from the egotism of pride springing from prosperity ; I did not, and in my self-elected wisdom, rejecting the experience of ages, I resolved to bring up my son in perfect ignorance, and I was strengthened in this decision by the Amazonian’s doctrine. She had ever regretted Jacques de Lor’s and my love of learning ; and had not events proved the justice of her opinions ? De Lor was a mere visionary ; and for me, what had I gained by knowledge

and its refinements, but a keener sense of the misery 'to which flesh is heir?' Oh! how often had I, not of late, envied the serfs, who, with intellects scarcely raised above the mules and asses they saddled, seemed to enjoy life merely from a sense of existence. To them, sunshine, fresh water, a full feed, conveyed pleasure unalloyed by reflection and its hand-maid sorrow. Oh! great was the Creator's mercy when He would have shielded His creatures of clay from knowledge—source of woe. How oft, too, had not the Persian and I conversed over the sad truth of how on earth the principle of evil rises triumphant over that of good; and while from the dark urn of Ahriman freely rush forth the abundant waters of disappointment and sorrow, few are the drops of sweetness with which Ormusd intermingles the bitter stream of which every child of man is doomed to partake. Enough, I resolved that Edrid should be brought up in total ignorance of all the institutes of man,—I may add, of God. Christianity, after which my soul had oft panted, I rejected—not without a struggle

—because I could not reconcile its pure, its merciful and sublime doctrines with the profligacy, cruelty, and grovelling spirit of its disciples, and my reason eschewed the idolatry of Paganism—so Edrid should learn nothing. Alas ! for my ill-fated son.

“ Left solely to his own resources, and rarely quitting, except under the Persian’s guidance or mine, the precincts of my palace and its encircling grounds, the mind,—the thinking mind of my son formed its own tastes. Nature had stamped the impress of truth on its pure essence ; discovering this, the Persian, wedded to his philosophic creed, gravely, according to his country’s ancient custom, invested Edrid with the girdle of truth, and by instructions expressed in the flowery language of the East, strove to convince him of its sublime grandeur and independence. Strange that a sentiment so ennobling has proved the source of Edrid’s and my misery. I have just said that Edrid’s mind formed its own tastes ; his sole delight consisted in the culture of flowers and the practice of music. The former I encouraged, as tending towards his

health ; and for the latter his genius was so great that it must have burst through any restraint ; however, I offered none.

“ Edrid’s voice was exquisite ; one could scarcely have believed that its full, silver, clear notes issued from so delicate a frame ; and he possessed a power of modulating it which no master of the art could possibly improve. Of an earnest, energetic temper he eschewed idleness or sloth, and found occupation in learning several instruments ; he touched the cithern with skill, and when he breathed through his shepherd’s pipe—a simple instrument—the air was filled with notes of harmony. Brought up in the East, and from the enthusiasm of his nature it best suited, he oft poured forth his soul in rhapsodies of Oriental poetry rapidly composed as the music inspired him. But I dwell too much on my theme of praise. Could any sentiment exceed my love, it was my pride in the bright youth ; nor did his beauty or accomplishments inspire me with so much delight as his virtue. As time passed, many changes, which I shall not pause to recount, occurred in Jaffa. When

Edrid had reached his fifteenth year, the Saracens seized possession of the town. Then hundreds of Christians were massacred under circumstances of great cruelty. Subsequently the Jews were banished, and the place became dangerous to strangers. My Moslem protector had been for some time dead ; and as the Persian prince felt his end rapidly approaching, he strenuously advised me to return with my son to Europe ; not that he feared for my safety, the Saracen dynasty rather secured it, but his love for Edrid was only second to mine, and he fancied that his health was declining under the fervid heat of an Eastern sun.

“ The mere suggestion that Edrid’s health was declining resolved me to leave my luxurious palace, — for every sentiment had merged into love for my child. He received the communication with his usual obedient gentleness, though like all persons endowed with sensibility, he was much attached to Jaffa, the scene of his happy childhood. He then, in gentle accents, inquired relative to his father ; but with a sternness I seldom used towards him, I mentioned, that until

he reached his one-and-twentieth year I was bound by a solemn obligation not to acquaint him with the circumstances of his birth. In effect, the Templar had won this promise from me. Edrid, with his usual gentleness, acquiesced ; nor did my refusal grieve him. Ignorant of society, he could not experience the same solicitude about who his father had been as would a youth acquainted with the world and its ways, and of the disgrace and disabilities attached to illegitimacy ; and which stigma would exclude my high-minded, sensitive son from all the distinctions of knighthood, and that too in a chivalric, though degenerate age.

CHAPTER IV.

“Heaven seem’d to frown, the sea became my foe,

.
By seas’ dark waves, and froward winds from heav’n,
Unto my foes at shore I up was given.”

WARTON’S *History of English Poetry*.

“IMMEDIATELY after the Persian’s death (he bequeathed to me his wealth), I prepared to depart from Jaffa. I disposed of my palace, and being from my love of knowledge well acquainted with the calculations of traffic, I turned all my property into jewels, spices, and various other articles,—engaged a vessel well manned and appointed, and sailed for Europe. But from the day I quitted Syria misfortune attended my progress. A storm overtook the ship, and for days it was dashed about at the mercy of the

roaring winds. Let me be brief over the agonising recollection. Suffice it then to say, that after incredible sufferings Edrid, myself, and a few more of the crew, escaped in a boat, but the vessel with my treasure sunk and lay buried under the waters of the unfathomable deep.

“By the aid of a few coins I had at the time of the storm about my person, Edrid and I were enabled to reach Paris, where I expected to find some of the Jongleurs—it being a favourite resort of the tribe, as by their performances they gained large profit. Think, then, of my despair when I learned that they had not only been banished from the city, but from France, by the stern law of Louis Hutin, then the reigning monarch, but who, like his father Philip le Bel, was solely ruled by Charles Count de Valois his uncle.”

“Ah!” interrupted Gaultier, “now indeed you interest me; my fortunes also are interwoven with De Valois.”

“And self alone interests you, Bishop of Longris!” retorted Freida, bitterly. “It is well, I seek not sympathy but revenge, and

have that to explain and offer which will command your assistance. And, Gaultier, it was your evidence that a Saxon Jongleur had instructed the Templars in sorcery, which brought the decree of banishment against the tribe ; and De Valois' successful villany illustrates how much of evil a bad man in power can execute. To how few, then, should rule over others be permitted ! For me to acquire a knowledge of where the tribe had fled was impossible, from the general panic that reigned throughout the kingdom,—every person denied having any acquaintance with them : and my inquiries after you, Gaultier, were equally unsuccessful. Thus, after having for years revelled in luxury, I was with my son reduced to actual beggary. Only reserving a ruby cross, the Templar's first gift of love, I parted with some jewels that chanced to be on our persons when we escaped the yawning abyss of the waters. Oh, that my son and I had together sunk into them. When these were gone we obtained a precarious livelihood by the musical talents of Edrid, who sang his Oriental rhapsodies through the streets, but

without any accompaniment, as his musical instruments had been wrecked, and this to him was a source of disquiet. My great object was to obtain sufficient means to proceed to Germany, and there seek out some of the tribes. With this hope I began to practise the greatest penury, and removed with my son to an upper chamber in a dilapidated tower, situate over an ancient gateway which rose between Montfaucon and the Palace of Justice. The tower, built in a circular form and of slight rude materials, was most probably erected as a guard-house during the wars of Philip Augustus with the Empire. At the period I speak of it was deserted, except by an old couple who were glad to let it for a small gratuity.

“Our apartment was large, and had two recesses, shaded by canopies of wood-work; beneath these were our couches, the privacy and poverty of the place seemed to promise security; and only for the ceiling being so low as to render it unwholesome, I should have been well content with our lodging.

“The anxiety of mind which I had suffered, the privation of luxuries which long

indulgence had rendered necessary, the closeness of my miserable apartment, forming such a contrast to my elegant residence near Jaffa, whose rich perfumes were wafted and refreshed by soft breezes which, passing over the blue waters of the Mediterranean, played through silken draperies into my superb apartments,—all combined to throw me into a slow intermitting fever.

“ At first, in pity to my Edrid, I strove to bear up against its undermining influence, but the exhausted frame communicated its lassitude to my mind. I did not suffer much delirium, but I lost a just sense of my position, and, forgetting our poverty, I would call imperatively for refreshments far beyond our means ; then, as I have since learned, Edrid would rush into the streets and sing some wild pathetic ballad expressive of his filial sufferings. There was such a heart-rending pathos in his voice, that the most vapid and selfish seldom resisted his pleadings. Still the mite doled out by charity merely afforded subsistence.

“ There is a blank in my memory as to the exact period of my illness : in the midst

of it Edrid was attacked by a severe cold which caused hoarseness; for in his solicitude for me he had constantly rushed out to earn relief at all hours, and during all weather, and lightly clad. Here, then, was lost our only chance of existence—his voice for the time being was hushed.

“I had sufficient recollection to observe him leaning over my couch, his tears falling over my glowing face : while bewildered and only sensible to thirst, impatiently I demanded some cooling flavoured draught, for my stomach rejected water. A short time, and even this dim perception was lost to me, and for several days all was a blank ; of these I have no memory.

“Gradually I recovered, and perceived that a great change had taken place in our position : a soft pillow supported my head ; delicate fruits and rich cordials were at hand ; my son was smiling with happiness at my convalescence ; and it being evening when I awoke from refreshing slumber, he was playing a cithern of superior power, accompanying it with a rhapsody hastily composed, expressive of joy at my recovery. For

several days I had been improving. His voice was that of a seraph, harmony and love united. All this pleased me, but, strange to say, I made no inquiry as to how the happy alteration had been brought about.

“Gaultier, I mentioned that our chamber was in a dilapidated tower over an ancient gateway at Montfaucon. It was a very old building, principally of wood, but here and there intersected with rude stone-work : it had two windows ; one of these opened on the barrier, and had a large balcony, and was cheerful, both from a sunny aspect and the numbers passing constantly through the gate beneath. Of the other even now I cannot speak with composure..

“It was at the farther end of the chamber in the tower, and which was not connected with any other apartment in the building ; this window commanded an extensive view ; and, just opposite, rose a high gibbet erected by Marigni, Minister of France, for the execution of criminals accused of crimes of peculiar magnitude ; and to the left might still be seen a spot where several of the Templars had been burned ; also other delinquents had there perished.

CHAPTER V.

“Come, take the harp—’tis vain to muse
Upon the gathering ills we see;
Oh! take the harp and let me lose
All thoughts of ill in hearing thee.”

MOORE.

“THE summer’s evening was on the decline, when, for the first time, I chanced to look out on Montfaucon; and the line of departing glory which, at the sun’s setting tinged the edge of the horizon, rendered the dark clouds which had gathered above Marigni’s gibbet more strikingly gloomy. Probably I still suffered under the weakness and excitement of the fever. I know not; but as I leant forward, a horrible hallucination rose to my imagination. I saw Edrid suspended on the gibbet—plainly, positively saw him. Uttering a shriek of

anguish, I stepped to the casement, staggered, and would have fallen; but with a bound he caught me in his arms, bore me to the couch near the opposite window and scattered essence on my face. Moved by his tenderness, I burst into a passion of tears; they relieved me, and at his request I lay down, and to prevent conversation, to which I felt unequal, affected to sleep.

“It was by this time nearly dark. Edrid gently opened the window, and seating himself in the balcony, began to sing some Persian love-songs. After a time he changed the measure. Perhaps the gloom, the solitude, the starry heavens,—all tended to fill his soul with sadness, and with memories of Syria’s land, where his young life had been bright and sweet as its delicious climate. I know not why, but rising from the couch, unperceived by him, I gazed on the minstrel. He was perfectly entranced; his head thrown back; his hair waving down his shoulders; his eyes fixed on heaven; a perfect David he seemed to my partial love. His master-hand struck the instrument to

a wailing note, and he sung forth the following verses, his *earliest* composition.

“ Here, Gaultier, read ; I cannot repeat them. This leaf,” she said, pointing to one in a small volume : “ all these were composed by Edrid, my only and beloved child.

“ By the Babylonian waters,
Sat me down in silent grief ;
Sion ! Sion ! thy remembrance
Brought our sorrows no relief.

On the trees which grew around us,
We our harps neglected hung ;
They, who captive here had bound us,
Song required in Hebrew tongue.

Melody amidst our sadness ;
Sion’s songs at their demand ;
Shall we sing the Lord in gladness,
In a strange and distant land ?

When, O Salem ! I forget thee,
May my hand forget its art ;
May the voice for ever leave me,
Should my mirth from thee depart.

Lord, forget not the hosts of Edom,
In Jerusalem’s sad day ;
When they robbed her of her freedom,
‘ Down to earth with her ! ’ cried they.

Learn, O Babylon's proud daughter,
Soon to feel the avenger's hand :
Blest is he who shall reward thee,
As thou savedst Israel's land."

"Alas !" observed Freida, "the words, though full of poetry, are nothing ; it was the voice—the minstrel—which gave the charm.

"I started up and looked into the barrier, for a murmur of voices, which the enraptured youth had not heard, fell on my ear ; and through the gloom I could distinguish a large company of knights and cavaliers, who had drawn up beneath to hear the enrapturing sounds. They consisted of a party of falconers, headed by Louis Hutin, and were retiring after the day's sport, when attracted by the melody.

"Without any apparent cause I became alarmed, and catching the arm of my enthusiastic boy, suddenly drew him into the chamber, then softly closed the casement. After waiting for a few moments, finding that the music had ceased, the party rode off. This was proved to me by the clattering of their horses' hoofs ; and soon after brazen

trumpets were sounded, announcing the King's return to the Louvre.

“Having lighted a lamp, and spread our frugal supper, I served Edrid; he was cheerful, ate with appetite; but I could not swallow, such a depression weighed on my spirits, unaccountable, intangible, still unconquerable.

“I took up the cithern, and was struck by its antiquity and peculiar fashion; it seemed also of great value, for in front was the grim head of a Jew, encrusted with gold; and, as by chance, my fingers wandered through the chords, they sent forth rich, deep, soft sounds.

“‘Edrid, my love,’ I remarked, ‘this is a fine instrument, and of exquisite workmanship; and now I think on it, how came it into your possession, all those we brought from Jaffa being lost by shipwreck?’ I sighed at the recollection. ‘Speak, my son—have you discovered a friend? or did that sweet voice of yours earn money sufficient to purchase this? Remember, Edrid, that since my illness, until the last

few days, my memory was lost, and time to me a blank.'

"A sudden change gloomed his bright face; for some moments he was confused. Then with gentleness, but strong emotion, he said, 'Of course I shall conceal nothing from you, though it may displease, for you have often said that I should not take what belonged to others; and moved by the extremity of your illness, I have transgressed that law.'

"'Oh, speak!' I interrupted; 'this suspense is torture. I dread some evil—speak, and I promise silence and attention!'

"'Well, then, my beloved parent, on the afternoon of the day called by the Christians 'Corpus Christi,' and which they celebrate as a festival, you were unusually fevered, and called wildly for drink. I handed water, all I could procure. Your stomach loathed it, and you muttered, 'Without some beverage, I die!' My heart swelled with anguish. I rushed into the streets to earn a few coins, but my grief

checked even utterance. I could not speak—I could not beg. A crowd rushing on jostled me; and, as it increased, I was hurried along. I could just perceive that we were preceded by some persons elevating a huge crucifix, so I knew they were Christians; and then it occurred to me that, as they were engaged in some pious 'observances—and as I knew from you that charity is an imperative duty among the Christians—I hoped to interest some one of them to assist you. While thus reflecting, I found myself in a temple they call St. Martin's, for I have since been there and inquired.

“ ‘Near a high and distant altar from where I had entered, stood a high-priest attired in rich and graceful robes. A number of lamps burned on the altar, shedding a beautifully clear light. There were several other lights, though less brilliant, scattered about on different shrines, while other parts were left in profound darkness. The whole effect was imposing, and I felt pleased and soothed: but it is not of this that I would speak, but of the high-

priest who addressed the multitude, and whose words have left on my mind an indelible impression.

“O my mother! this good priest spoke of a God who created all things, and now rules over the beings of His creation and over all the earth in truth, and in justice, and in mercy; but through His wisdom, inscrutable to the limits of man’s understanding, He oft permits sorrow to trouble the best and holiest as a purification from original sin, while to seeming the wicked and impious frequently prosper. Then the priest described an hereafter—a heaven where sin could never enter, and the voice of woe or of wailing was never heard, but glory and praise were eternally sung in loud hallelujahs to the honour of God the Omnipotent, the Omnipresent. There all was peace, harmony, and love. He ceased; and then burst forth a full choir of music, so rich, so rapturous, so sublime, that its inspiration seemed to wing my spirit, which, emancipating itself from the tabernacle of clay, was taking its flight to that blessed heaven the priest had so eloquently described. Overpowered by

ecstasy, I prostrated myself, and wept aloud. My resolution was taken—I would apply to that pious priest, and beg relief for you, my mother. He—the minister, he said, of Christ—in that name could not refuse. But now a cloud of delicious incense arose; it overpowered my frame, weakened by two days of fasting; for I had failed in gaining relief. I was just conscious that the last faint echoes of the music died away. Then a profound sleep pressed upon my eyelids.

“ ‘ I know not how long I slept, but when I awoke the priest was gone, the lights extinguished; near me knelt some persons, and they prayed aloud, and seemed to find solace in their devotions. But alas! I knew not prayer; I had never been instructed in it; my spirit was bewildered—it wanted support and comfort; but it had no staff to rest upon—lonely, desolate, hopeless, I could but weep bitter tears. These pious people soon left, and I was startled at seeing no one in the wide, empty space, lately crowded and full of harmony. I moved about to discover some portal, passing many shrines, with lamps, and figures, and other things which

I understood not ; but above all rose in front a crucifix. At length I reached a shrine where two sweet-smelling lamps were hung. A picture of an angelic-looking woman ascending to heaven, and surrounded with winged cherubs, hung to the back of the shrine. My heart throbbed with rapture. 'And why may I not also ascend to heaven?' I reflected. Among other things resting before this picture, was a casket of crystal and gold ; it was very beautiful to look at. I wished to examine more closely, but on attempting to raise it, found that it was secured down ; the lid, however, sprang up, and I perceived a vessel of Jewish fashion lying within. I took it in my hand, and discovered it to be a vase of rare and excellent workmanship wrought out of solid gold, and embellished with gems. It was preferable to any of the vessels you so prized in your palace at Jaffa. While replacing it, I suddenly recollected Ozias the Jew, who purchased from me the rings and pins you had sent to be disposed of after our arrival in Paris. How fortunate ! I thought, to find this. The gold and gems are of ex-

ceeding value. Ozias will gladly purchase it; then I can relieve my mother. I placed the vase in my bosom, and soon succeeded in discovering an entrance, and left the temple.'

"I had listened to the young melodious accents of my son with interest until he described the act of which he had been guilty. Then I shrieked with anguish, 'Lost, Edrid! What will become of us? Can you be ignorant that sacrilege is one of the greatest of all crimes, and to the Christians can admit of no extenuation?'

"With his usual gentleness he replied, 'I am aware that in meddling with what did not belong to me I erred. But what is sacrilege?—what is crime? My dear mother, if such evils exist would not you have instructed me? I am bewildered!'

"Oh! the exaggeration of sorrow these mild words conveyed to my heart! So the system of my vain egotism and discontent was tested and proved to be craft, not wisdom! I had cast my greave against the world—a terrible antagonist; and it was crushing me. But should Edrid the

INNOCENT be blasted by my folly ? And now arose to my mind's eye the horrible hallucination of my son perishing on the gibbet of Montfaucon. My agonies were horrible : he wept—held me to his bosom. An hour elapsed ; then commanding myself, I listened to the conclusion of what he had to relate. Just inquiring, 'Well, my son, did you see Ozias the Jew, and acquaint him with your name and residence ?'

“ ‘Certainly not, my mother, for I have never disobeyed you ; and remember you commanded that I should keep both secret.’

“ ‘Proceed with your relation, my son.’

“ ‘Leaving St. Martin's, I hastened to the Jews' quarter. Ozias, who is wealthy, is in consequence—for they are very rapacious after gold—afraid of the Christians, and he lives in a subterraneous apartment too horrible for an Eastern's tomb. I just said, 'Here is a vase of much value that I mean to dispose of.' He beckoned me to follow. We groped through several underground passages, damp, unhealthy ; then entered a small square apartment

lighted by a couple of argent lamps, gloomy enough, however. ‘Come, boy,’ he said peevishly, ‘show what have you.’ I handed the vase; and never can I forget the emotion the Jew betrayed. Claspings it, he prostrated himself on the ground, called to the gods of his fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to rejoice with him that some of the gems of THE Temple were restored to Jehovah’s best beloved, though then wandering people, the children of Israel—rescued from the Gentiles, the accursed Nazarenes, the worshippers of Mammon and of Moloch, whose altars—nay, even where the banners of the Cross waved—reeked with the blood of human victims. I stood tranquilly, astonished at the violent gesticulations of Ozias. Now kneeling, now bounding up; kissing the base of the vase; holding it near the lamp. Suddenly he clasped me in his arms, exclaiming, ‘Beautiful youth! blessed boy! Look here; see and admire. Look! these sardonic engravings with the names of the tribes of God’s chosen children—of His best beloved—of those into whose presence He

deigned to send His angels. Yes! these gems once adorned the sacred vestments of Israel's High-Priest; and the vase was wrought out of the gold of the Holy of Holies. Good youth! Fair as those angel visitants; art thou a Christian?’

“‘I answered in the negative, observing I have never been taught what men call prayer; and it marvels me to see all people—for I have known those of many nations—so vehement in their own creeds, and deriding and contemning that of others. These varieties of opinions confound my thoughts; and oft when I have attempted to account for these differences, I found myself, as to-night, groping my way in the dark, not knowing where to find a resting-place.

“‘Again he embraced me, exclaiming with vivacity, ‘I rejoice that you are not one of the Christians—our persecutors; they who represent the attributes of their God as mercy, charity, meekness, long-suffering,—and in contradistinction light the fires of *auto-da-fés* all for Mammon—Mammon—Mammon!’

“ ‘Act generously by me, Jew,’ I said, ‘for my parent is in great want.’ Seeing several musical instruments, I added, ‘Gladly would I possess one of these. Music is my art.’

“ ‘Choose,’ he cried. ‘From henceforth command the love of the descendants of Israel.’

“ ‘I selected a shepherd’s pipe ; for you, my mother, ever loved to hear me breathe on it. Then I chose this cithern ; its antique fashion pleased my fancy. And as I touched its chords to prove its power, I played some of the ancient laments I had heard in Palestine. The Jew on listening became so excited, probably from some memory of the past, that his vivacity startled me, and I hastily demanded the price of the instruments.

“ ‘Again clasping me in his arms, he exclaimed, ‘The pipe and cithern are yours without payment, good youth. I ask no questions as to how the vessel came into your possession. Keep your own secret. Fear not my betraying you ; for woe to us both if it is ever discovered!’ Placing the pipe in the folds of my gar-

ment, and slinging the cithern over my shoulder, I was retiring; when grasping my arm, he exclaimed, ‘Good youth! beautiful youth! you have exalted my soul to rapture by the inspirations of your genius, as with master-hand you struck the cithern’s cords to my country’s honour. Alas for me! Though time has withered my form and subdued my hopes, when I think on Jerusalem, memory is young. Good youth, raise, then, thy seraph voice again to soothe me with its melody.’

“ ‘Willing to gratify the old man who had acted so generously by me, I struck the instrument to an Eastern measure, accompanying it with the following words hastily composed to suit the air:—

“ ‘Woe! woe! my latest daylight sets,
Oh, Salem! on thy minarets;
Whose beauty morning may restore,
When I shall never see thee more.—

Ah! woe to me, Jerusalem!

When Siloa’s current softly flows,
All fresh as Salon’s dazzling snows;
Those mossy banks, to childhood sweet,
Will never bear the captives’ feet.—

Ah! woe to me, Jerusalem!

Thou mountain of the olive bowers,
Prankt fairly with thy glistening flowers—
Oh! never shall this form be laid,
Again beneath thy fragrant shade.—

Ah! woe to me, Jerusalem!

The solemn harp is silent all,
That Jesse's son made musical;
And desolation captives thee—
Land of the holy and the free!—

Jerusalem! Jerusalem!

Bind me with fetters every limb,
Still can the spirit breathe a hymn;
In distant lands, far, far away,
Still for thy peace my heart shall pray—

Jerusalem! Jerusalem!

Tears flow in vain with yonder sun,—
Hope sinks and dies when he is gone:
Eve shuts thee from my aching sight,
And folds me in eternal night.—

Ah! woe is me, Jerusalem!

“ ‘ This, my mother,’ said Edrid, as he laid down the cithern, ‘ is a brief account of my interview with Ozias, who spake so rapidly, and of things new to me, and which I cannot now bring clearly to my recollection.’

“ I now, in forcible language, pointed

out to Edrid the light in which the Christians would view his act of sacrilege. He caressed me, saying, 'Even though I were to be consigned to death for this crime, as it saved your life, my mother, I cannot regret the deed; and as danger attends our sojourn here, let us on the instant depart from Paris. I have conquered my sleep.'

"Nay, my son, you require rest. Sleep, then, for this night in peace; and with early morning we will take our departure. Yes, Edrid, soon and we shall return to Syria's blessed land. And as this vessel seems of such value to the Jew, fear not he will guard his treasure.'

"I doubt it not,' replied Edrid. He then retired to his alcove, and sunk into a sweet repose.

"That my temper, in general so active that I scarcely formed a plan till I put it into execution, should, at a moment of such fearful danger, when my son's life was compromised, be so tranquil as to postpone flight to collect a few valueless trifles, has impressed my mind with the terrible idea that an evil spirit in whose hands I am

but a tool, rules over my destiny ; and succeeding events corroborate the belief."

"Freida," said the Bishop, "a mind so constructed as yours, and imbued with so much learning, should conquer this strange fancy. Again I desire you to be more brief in your detail ; I am impatient to quit this grove."

"Yes," she answered, "to return to the pomps and pleasures of your palace. Well, the time has passed since the Syren's voice could soothe my griefs. Now such joys rise to my view as a wild mockery of the stern realities of life.

CHAPTER VI.

“O Lord!—my boy—my Arthur—my fair son!
My life—my joy—my food—my all the world!
My widow-comfort, and my sorrow’s cure!”

SHAKSPEARE.

“I HAD concluded my preparations for departure, and at midnight, when the city’s guards proclaimed the hour, without undressing, to snatch a few hours’ repose, lay down on my couch.

“The first faint rays of coming morning had not risen above the horizon, when I was startled by hearing voices below, followed by advancing footsteps. Edrid, too, was roused, and hastily donned his attire; but ere he had concluded, there was a loud knocking at our door. My son hastened to open it. ‘Dare not!’ I wildly exclaimed; ‘they come to seize, to kill you! Montfau-

con !' A dreadful sickness shook my frame. I groaned, reeled, and fell to the ground insensible.

"On recovering, I found myself in Edrid's arms, while he bathed my face with essences, every now and then pressing his soft lips to my throbbing temples. There were two strangers present. One, who stood beside me, was a small, spare man, apparently advanced in life. He had a long, thin visage, with a remarkably large forehead, and a countenance beaming with benevolence. His dress was that of a physician, and he was engaged bandaging my arm, from which I had been copiously bled. This caused me to feel very sick and weak. At some distance from where I lay stood, leaning against the wainscot, the other stranger. He was a tall, very stoutly-built person, attired in the dress of a jeweller or wealthy burgher. His large, prominent eyes were fixed on me with an expression of sternness and disdain. A shudder passed over my frame, as my heart whispered, 'That harsh man is the arbiter of my son's destiny.'

"Longris!" cried Freida, grasping his

arm, "it is necessary for me, to the better understanding of my tale, to acquaint you fully with the extraordinary tissue of events—events which interested all France, nay, the whole of Europe, and which sprung from the simple fact of my hapless son, in his total ignorance of the Christian laws, embezzling the holy vessel. So, Gaultier, attend patiently, as I relate the strange particulars communicated to me by the Père Lagravare and Hubert Clisson, to account for their having forced an entrance into my chamber on the morning of which I was speaking.

"The vase, independent of its exquisite workmanship and intrinsic value, was deemed inestimable, from a prophecy attached to it. The gems which adorned it were said to have been rifled out of the Holy of Holies at the destruction of the Temple by Titus; and the engravings on the sardonyxes bespoke their great antiquity and Jewish origin. This superb vase, after passing through the hands of several of the Roman kings, by a strange vicissitude, fell into the possession of a monk, who presented it to the church of St. Martin,

in Paris, his native city. There, for upwards of two centuries, it lay neglected, until discovered by Charles de Valois, who possessed a taste for the fine arts, and who is one of the greatest searchers after antiquities of this age. The engravings were filled up and begrimed with dust; no vulgar hand could restore them to their former clearness of impression or lustre. He had heard of Hubert Clisson's excellence in the art, and for that he removed the unjust decree which had banished this artisan from France, commanded him to Paris, and intrusted the holy vase to his care, impressing on his mind to guard it well; for in consequence of a prophecy, that, could the Jews obtain its possession for nine years, in the space of three times nine subsequently, the scattered children of Israel would be again reunited, and in full possession of their beloved Jerusalem.

“From the royal treasury De Valois, then, brought forth a very rich and curious casket of crystal and gold, with a key in the form of a cross, and of ingenious construction. Within this the vase was to be placed; and

for further security, the casket was screwed down on a marble altar, on which, in letters of gold, were inscribed the history of the vase, and the prophecies attached to it; also an explanation, far as they were understood, of the engravings on the sardonxyes. And Louis Hutin valued the vase beyond his kingdom; and during the time that Clisson was polishing it, he commanded that each evening it should be secured in its casket, and the key brought to him, for greater safety.

“On the morning of the evening that Edrid had taken the vase, Hubert Clisson had succeeded in finishing the cleaning of it in a manner so perfect as to elicit the praise and the thanks of Charles de Valois, and he took it to the Louvre to show the King, who sent for the Bishop of Paris and others to admire the long-neglected gems. All this delayed the jeweller till the afternoon was advanced. Then, impatient to return home, he placed the treasure beneath the folds of his mantle, and hastened to St. Martin’s. By this time vespers had just concluded; and as Clisson entered he met the Bishop of Beauvais,

who had been the officiating priest, and preached in honour of Corpus Christi. It was he whose eloquence and piety had made such an impression on Edrid.

“On seeing Hubert Clisson, the Bishop inquired why on a saint’s festival he had neglected his devotions. Clisson explained the cause, offering to show the vase; and for this purpose Beauvais accompanied him to the shrine, and expressed his admiration of the engravings. Clisson laid it in its casket, and then discovered that he had neglected to get the key from Louis Hutin. This was embarrassing. He consulted what was best to be done.

“‘Undoubtedly,’ replied Beauvais, ‘deposit the vase in its case, where it will be perfectly safe. All have left the church but a few penitents, whereas the streets are crowded with persons of every description.’

“‘I approve of your advice,’ said Clisson. Then he closed the lid of the casket, and they left St. Martin’s.

“The Bishop proceeded to his palace, and Clisson to the Louvre to see the King. The King being engaged, it was upwards of

two hours ere the jeweller could be admitted to his majesty. Immediately on procuring the key he hurried back. Imagine his consternation when he found that the vase was gone !

“By this time it was seven in the morning, and no clue to trace its loss. There was but one measure to pursue ; so, in a state almost of frenzy, Hubert Clisson rushed back to the palace, announced the fact ; and to exonerate himself related every circumstance which had occurred from the period he had brought the vase to St. Martin’s until its disappearance.

“The event caused a strong sensation in Paris. The public at once imputed the sacrilege to the Jews — the disbelieving Jews—and in all the chapels the priests poured forth the most awful anathemas against the wretch who could perpetrate such a crime, and a large reward was offered for his apprehension ; none doubted but that the children of Israel were the delinquents. Yet such is the Jews’ attachment to the memory of their country, that though terrified at the cruelties to which

they expected to be exposed, they rejoiced that a gem of the Temple was rescued from the Nazarenes, drawing flattering hopes from the prophecy. Now all this was what might have been expected, when the sacred vessel was purloined ; but the conspiracy which was founded on it, to the destruction of one of the noblest men that France ever boasted, casts a dark stigma over the age.

“Enguerand Marigni at this period was Minister of France, and the Bishop of Beauvais was his brother, and they were esteemed as two of the most talented and amiable men in the French dominions, but, unfortunately, were at enmity with Charles de Valois, in con——”

Here Gaultier hastily interrupted Freida, remarking, “I know all the particulars, and that De Valois vowed their destruction ; and, Freida, I am also aware that De Valois, in his revenge, is capable of any act of cruelty. Proceed ; I am anxious to learn the fate of Marigni.”

“The high public esteem in which the Minister was held still further irritated De Valois, but his fury as yet had proved

impotent, when, such is the unaccountable current of human affairs, the act of my son,—a pauper, as I may say, in Paris, presented the long-sought-for opportunity.

“Charles de Valois had paid great attention to Clisson, as he spoke of the vase. Undoubtedly the whole bearings of the case were mysterious and suspicious; and from these materials he formed the boldest scheme that ever was suggested for the destruction of others. He entered before the King, at the time surrounded by his Barons, and in a tone of uncompromising decision accused the Bishop of Beauvais of the sacrilege.

“The pious Bishop treated the accusation with calm contempt. Not so Enguerand; naturally of a warm temper, his passion rose to frenzy, and he abused De Valois in terms of bitter sarcasm, recapitulating his many crimes. This ended in increased hatred; and they being the most powerful chiefs in France, the city became a scene of confusion; every person of every degree, from princes down to the lowest serf, adopting either side; and the names of the Valois or of the Marigni became a war-cry,

and scarcely a day elapsed that some violent brawl did not occur between the contending parties. Now of all those concerned in the loss of the vase, none were so wretched as Hubert Clisson. For many years Beauvais had been the exiled jeweller's only friend, and now, though inadvertently, he had cast a stigma on his patron's character. Then he was aware that Louis had some suspicions not favourable to him (Clisson); for he commanded that he should not leave Paris until the mysterious sacrilege was solved.

"Three weeks had elapsed, and still no clue to the vase; when, as the Père Lagravier was slowly wending his way through some of the gloomy streets in the Jews' quarter, he was suddenly jostled by a decrepid old woman; she was evidently in a state of anxiety and hurry.

" 'How is this?' he gently demanded, 'What makes you rush in this wild manner? Woman, you nearly threw me down.'

"In broken French she sobbed out, 'My master Ozias the Jew is at the point of death. For some weeks he has been

declining; but to-night he has been seized with fits. I seek assistance.'

" 'I am a leech,' replied the Père. 'Lead me to your master, and I will prove my skill.'

" Rapidly chattering out thanks, she passed forward to the Jew's house, and led the Père, through the subterranean passages Edrid had found so gloomy, into the square apartment, its two lamps burning. Ozias at the time had roused from the fit; but on seeing a Christian stranger enter, his terror caused a relapse.

" Observing that the Jew held his hand pressed against his bosom, the Père Lagravare concluded that he there suffered pain. So he tore open his dress to examine, and, to his amazement, beheld the missing vase within the folds of Ozias's vest! On the instant the Père, who was the intimate friend and companion of Hubert Clisson, recognised the treasure.

" Truly benevolent, pitying the invalid, he used every means to revive Ozias; then inquired how he had obtained the vase. The wretched Jew repeated the exact truth,

vehemently declaring that though he were to pass through the tortures of fire and water he knew no more. Adding, 'The youth who brought it here was beautiful to behold, winning in manner, and most excellent in music: one could almost suppose that he was a being of a higher order than man. I gave him a shepherd's pipe and an ancient cithern. He said that he had a sick parent. I know no more.'

"All this was strange, but it bore the impress of truth. The Père felt for Ozias, but justice should be done; so the Jew, all ill as he was, followed the Père to Hubert Clisson's, whose joy at the restoration of the vase defies description. At the intercession of the Père, though Ozias was committed to strict confinement, he received no severity. No one, however, was permitted to visit him.

"The Bishop of Beauvais resided in the Hôtel St. Pol; and there Clisson found him, and triumphantly showed the vase, relating all the Jew had said.

"'Hah!' exclaimed the Bishop, 'God and truth are on our side, Hubert. I fancy

that I have a clue to the mystery. You know the old Tower of Montfaucon. Well, then, several evenings as I passed through the barrier, I have heard the most exquisite music poured forth from the upper chamber of the Tower. See to it: and my advice is, that the fact of the vase's discovery be kept secret until the wretch who committed the sacrilege is discovered, else Charles de Valois will put his demoniacal machinations into requisition to set aside the truth, which will at once acquit me and expose his malice.'

"By this time the barrier was closed for the night; and not to awaken curiosity, it was arranged not to visit the Tower until next morning. Had I, then, taken Edrid's advice and left that evening, what misery had been escaped! But alas! our destinies are predoomed. Mine's to evil.

"I now return to my revival from the fit. I lay in the supporting arms of my son while Hubert Clisson sternly repeated these circumstances. He spoke with the anger of an upright man whose character had been stigmatised by our vices; and he

gazed on us with scorn as a pair of itinerant vagabonds who by scheming had involved the Marignis in trouble.

“In this melancholy detail of facts, to dwell upon my own feelings of despair is useless. No force of language could delineate even a faint outline of my suffering. I had wept for trifles. When our wealth had been lost by shipwreck, I had found relief in wailing and in tears; and oft at the memory of my pleasant days in Syria, as I marked the contrast, have I sobbed with childish vehemence. But now I was calm—no sighs, no tears, no utterance.

“Addressing Edrid, the Père gravely said, ‘Young man, see what wide-spreading confusion your damning act of sacrilege has wrought—to think that the pious Bishop of Beauvais was implicated.’ He looked at my son’s fine countenance, and added, ‘These Jews are vile hypocrites. It may be, youth, that thou art innocent likewise. Speak the truth.’

“Now again I breathed freely, hoping that Edrid, to save his life, might suppress the truth. That would, at least, grant

time for reflection. Not so, to my grief. In his soft tones, which even in speaking were melodious, he said, ‘Christian, I grieve sorely that I have been guilty of such confusion; but none were concerned in this act but myself.’ He then related the facts simply, but dwelling with enthusiasm on the inspiration of the high-priest; and with more art than I expected suppressing all the Jew had said against the Christians. Indeed he struggled to acquit Ozias.

“ ‘That high-priest,’ observed the Père, ‘is the Bishop of Beauvais, him that you have deeply injured.’

“Tears rushed to Edrid’s eyes; he folded his hands, exclaiming, ‘Oh! that in anywise I should have offended that priest. Methinks I might again be happy could I hear his words of consolation and hope.

“Clisson and the Père looked at each other. And then, again, I was startled at seeing Edrid bring forward the pipe and the cithern, to corroborate the truth and acquit the Jew. Proud of his incomparable talents, and, in my mother’s love,

fancying that no one could resist his melody, I said, 'My son, prove the power of the cithern.' He laid me down gently, sunk on one knee, and, excited by our awful extremity, struck the chords, accompanying the instrument with one of the laments of Judah, in a strain of harmony so wild, so sad, so touching, that it seemed to rend the hearts of the listeners.

"Gurgling along its narrow way,
Siloah's softly flowing rill
Runs tuneful through the open day;
While its more distant murmurings fill
The twilight-haunted valleys stretching
Around the consecrated hill.

O Solyma! thy hallowed walls,
A tender, yet unfading grace,
Illumines gently, and recalls
Each well-remembered charm, each trace
Of old majestic fame that circles
On God's selected dwelling-place.

I weep to think the Gentiles' tent
Is pitched along each flowery dell;
I weep to see each battlement
Its tale of loss and ruin tell;
Where Grief's expressive beauty lingers,
And whispers forth a sad farewell.

Perfect in loveliness wert thou ;
And still a sun that cannot set,
Gilds pensively the verdant brow
Of Succoth and fragrant Olivet,
While shades angelical of glory,
Move o'er each tapering minaret.

Peace ! Salem make her home with thee,—
Yea, peace and plenteousness divine,
Bring thee thy lost prosperity.
Land of the holy seers and mine,—
Where David's voice and strings were waken'd,
Thou diadem of Palestine !”

“ The Père sobbed aloud. ‘ Cease, hapless youth,’ he exclaimed, ‘ cease this mournful lament. Oh ! blessed Virgin, that crime could corrupt such a highly-gifted being.’

“ Hubert Clisson had advanced towards the remote window to disguise emotions his austerer virtue condemned as criminal ; opening it, he looked out ; and I saw a shudder pass over him as he viewed the gibbet. And now as I thought on the almost certainty, that the terrible vision my fevered fancy had conjured up would most probably be realised, shriek after shriek burst from my tortured bosom, as the storm rages more

fiercely after the deadly calm which has preceded it.

“ ‘Oh!’ exclaimed Edrid, in his anxiety for me, indifferent to the presence of strangers, ‘calm this despair; believe me, my mother, the greatest regret to me is your anguish. Since I have heard that Christian priest was involved in sorrow by my act, my mind is distressed; still never can I regret my crime when I reflect that but for the Jew’s money you must have perished from want, even then a burning thirst consumed you; and to be subjected to the most painful death could not afflict me like the loss of you. Oh! reflect how desolate to be alone in this sad world, with no one to love me, and no one for me to love—nay, cheer up, even if I perish, death’s agony lasts but a few moments, and then all is over. And were it not for the separation from you, and the grief it would cause to you, dear mother, methinks that annihilation would be a relief; for since the night I spent at St. Martin’s my spirit is sad,—it seems to long for some undefinable, unattainable good.’

“ ‘Saviour of the world,’ exclaimed the Père, ‘this is not the language of guilt. I have for years watched over youth, from the first budding of the passions, and then traced temptation and crime in their progress ; and while this boy admits his guilt, I pronounce him innocent as to intention. What say you, Clisson ?’

“ Again hope cheered me, prostrating myself in Eastern fashion, I said,—

“ Kind sir, my son and I belong to the class in France termed Bohemians, and deemed unholy. Still for years I possessed much wealth and influence. All my possessions have been lost by shipwreck. I am endowed with learning, but my principles are against knowledge, as it only tends to increase our sensibilities to sorrow. Acting upon this opinion, my son is wholly ignorant of the laws or regulations of society, although his soul is pure as that of angels.’

“ I then mentioned how he had taken the vase, in consequence of my abject want, adding with earnestness,—

“ ‘ I am the original cause of my son’s

error. Now, Christians, I have studied your holy book ; and by the blessed Redeemer you worship, I solemnly implore of you to let me pass off as the purloiner of the vase ; that acquits your friends, and this withered form is prepared for the burning. Ah ! in mercy grant this request. Fear not ; I shall not fail, but rapturously embrace the flames, if so I save Edrid.’

“ Hubert Clisson and the Père Lagravaré hesitated, and vehemently I pressed my entreaty.

“ Then Edrid, assuming a stern look, such as seemed impossible to his soft features, and which gave him a resemblance to his warrior father, said, ‘ I would not save my life by injury to the poorest serf. That I am ignorant of human institutions, I regret ; that such existed until my crime I knew not ; but TRUTH I comprehend, I learned it from the Persian Prince, and by TRUTH I know that the crime of taking the vase was mine ; then, by TRUTH, I am the one to suffer.’

“ I would have spoken, but casting his arms around me, he softly said, ‘ I did not

expect this. You, mother, should know that your death would be far more difficult for me to support than my own.' I folded him to my heart in the anguish of despair.

"The Père's gentle nature was moved by this struggle of affection. He spoke aside to Hubert Clisson, who vehemently answered in a loud voice, 'Are you, Lagravare, fascinated, to plead the cause of these vagrants—actors by profession—acknowledged thieves, even to sacrilege? The best blood in France has been shed for less crime. I blush, Lagravare, for your weakness. You seem to overlook that both the Bishop of Beauvais and I are under suspicion for this crime; and that the only way of our acquittal is to stigmatise these itinerants. Still you uphold them.'

"'You are right, Hubert,' sighed Lagravare.

"'I remain here,' proceeded Clisson, 'to guard these prisoners. Meantime you proceed to the Provost—tell him that Beauvais commands secrecy inviolable, until the whole business is fit to lay before the public, and has deputed him—the Provost

—to take legal measures to secure these vagrants, and to bring them to trial.’

“All this by the stern jeweller was spoken aloud. It roused the spirit of Edrid: his face flushed, but assumed a look of severe decision.

“‘Mother,’ he said, ‘let us submit—no more entreaties. When the ocean, tossed by the storm, roared and foamed, threatening destruction, as well might you have hoped to lull its fury, as to win compassion or charity from that stern Christian. Were you resigned, unmurmuring could I bear my fate—nay, rejoice in death!’

“Oh, how like the Templar that bright youth then looked!

“‘Clisson,’ remarked the Père, ‘I shall now go; do not be uneasy if I delay. At early morning the Provost is seldom visible.’ Then he added, ‘Once these unfortunates are in the care of the Provost, Charles de Valois shall learn the fact.’

“‘Yes,’ interrupted Clisson, ‘and little thanks will that foul fiend give to those who aid in acquitting the Marignis. Now away.’

“The Père retired, and Clisson, eyeing

my son scornfully, bolted the door from the inside, and then sat down in the window, looking out on Montfaucon. On the instant, a terrible idea struck me—there was no compunction, no backsliding. I, who would have sprung into the torturing flames to save Edrid for that purpose, felt powers within me equal to any act of violence. That terrible morning had altered my nature. I was no longer feminine; my part was taken.

“‘Edrid,’ I said, speaking calmly, though in a husky voice, for my throat and tongue were parched and burning; ‘here, eat—you must not fast.’

“I laid some food before him. Thanking me, he partook of it, offering some to the jeweller, who gruffly declined. He was evidently bewildered by our manner. However, he stretched out his legs, and, leaning back, began to slumber. And, advancing to watch his repose, the gibbet met my view. This confirmed my purpose. I did not mean to kill Clisson, but to wound his right arm, so as to render it powerless, and thus escape with Edrid to this the Apostate’s grove, of which I had heard, but up to that period

had not visited. I was never unarmed, and drew out from the folds of my dress a small stiletto. My teeth set—my eyes glared—I made a step forward: a moment and the jeweller's arm had been struck off—for I had a maniac's strength—when I was seized by Edrid. The jeweller, however, had received a deep gash on his right shoulder, but no more. Franticly I strove to loose myself from Edrid's strong hold; but though pale and shocked, he was collected and firm. Indeed, from childhood, my son, though gentle as a dove, possessed the greatest fixedness of purpose.

“ ‘My mother,’ he sadly said, ‘grief for me has disturbed your reason, else you—so benevolent—ever seeking to comfort the afflicted—would not put another to pain.’

“ ‘Fool!’ I replied, passionately; ‘hope not, when they suspend you on yonder gibbet so highly elevated, or, it may be, hurl you into the burning flames, that any shall thus reason or interfere. No; the multitude will scorn you—point at you—scoff and insult you for your crime. And yet’—my heart softened—‘among them all, one

so gentle and kindly to the human race will not be found. Still, you should not have interfered with my purpose—it was disobedience.’

“He answered mildly, ‘When your anger subsides, you will thank, and not condemn me, for saving you from this deed of blood. Oh ! to deprive another of life is dreadful ! Alas ! to what grievous woe my taking that vase has led !’

“Interrupting him, I said, ‘Probably but for your interference, we might have escaped. I meant not to kill that stern man, only to prevent his detaining us, and thus resigning you to death.’

“This conversation was in Syriac, which was Edrid’s native language ; and as I was greatly excited, we spoke rapidly. In the meantime, Hubert Clisson, like a stag at bay, stood with a great clasp-knife in his hand. I was surely mad ; for I made a spring to seize it, and again Edrid interfered, and in the struggle received a flesh-wound in his breast ; it was given by Hubert in an attempt to strike at me. On seeing my son’s blood rush forth, my fury

was on the instant subdued. To win me from violence, the generous youth, careless of his own danger, complained of pain, and requested that I would bathe and bandage his wound; and while thus employed, the Père knocked at the door immediately, and Clisson admitted him; also a small, miserable-looking old man, with a sneering, sarcastic countenance, wearing a white silk coif tied under his grisly chin, and a loose-flowing robe over his tunic; and this was the Provost of Paris. Two ferocious-looking men followed with fetters, which I saw them fasten round Edrid's wrists and ankles. He offered no resistance, but submitted tranquilly, as a lamb going to the slaughter. Now my hope of saving his young life was gone. I heard Hubert Clisson accusing me of an attempt to murder him. I heeded it not; a faint sickness crept through all my blood—shudderings ensued—I believed I was dying. Then came on convulsions. I never before had experienced these fits; but ever since, under agitation, they have attacked me. At the period of Edrid's seizure my convulsions were followed by a long stupor.

CHAPTER VII.

“The song comes with its music, to melt and please the ear. It is like soft mist, that, rising from a lake, pours on the silent vale.”—OSSIAN.

“ALTHOUGH Edrid and I were viewed as a pair of the vilest criminals of the debased class of the Jongleurs, or Bohemians, still our fate awakened, if not compassion, a strong interest, as we had become instruments in the hands of the most powerful and most dreaded prince in the French dominions.

“Hubert Clisson showed his knowledge of Charles Count de Valois, when he said that the discovery of Edrid having purloined the holy vase would prove to him a source of regret. The King, who from the commencement derided the idea of the pious Beauvais being guilty of sacrilege, no sooner heard of

our apprehension, than, yielding to his anger, in his usual rough manner, he attacked Valois for daring to bring forward such a malicious charge against the prelate, swearing that the next time he (Valois) interfered in his kingdom, he would banish him from France, where he acted as a constant fire-brand among his subjects. This address of Louis added fuel to De Valois' hatred against the Marignis; but while he inwardly vowed their destruction in the King's presence, he curbed his fury, and preserved his usual graceful, courtly manner.

“Every circumstance connected with the vase wore an air of mystery. Ozias's illness, increased by confinement and the horrible apprehension of being committed to the flames, carried him off within a few days, depriving Clisson of his most efficient witness. Then he and the Père, being known as the partisans of Beauvais, less stress would be laid on their evidence; and Charles de Valois boldly declared that a pair of itinerant vagrants had been at once threatened and bribed to acknowledge the crime, that so Beauvais might be acquitted.

“To the forwarding of the Count de Valois’ deep-laid plot, on the fourth day after our apprehension—it was the morning of Ozias’s death—in place of being removed, as was usual in such cases, to the common prison at midnight, under a strong guard, Edrid and I were conveyed to the Provost’s house, though in general prisoners of distinction—those accused of high treason—were alone placed under the Provost’s immediate protection. This was one, as will appear, of the Count de Valois’ boldest strokes of policy, and which nothing but Edrid’s lofty character could have defeated: my son combining the most uncompromising truth with a fixedness of purpose, which neither torture nor the fear of death could conquer. It was also De Valois’ policy, under the plea of seeking other witnesses, to have our trial postponed.

“I must here remark, that at this period I was unconscious of passing events, excitement having caused a severe relapse of my fever; and for several days, as I subsequently learned, my recovery was very doubtful. I know not exactly how long I had been at

the Provost's ; I only remember awakening from a refreshing slumber, and finding myself in a large, square apartment, and which was very gloomy, although there were three casements opposite to the couch on which I was resting. I had been well attended, as I might prove useful to Valois. A full moon shed its beams through the strong bars of the casement, chequering the floor of white and black marble with a dubious and quivering light, and paling the sickly hue of an untrimmed lamp suspended from the ceiling. A goblet of prepared milk was near ; I drank of it, and tried to remember what could have brought me to that strange place. Gradually, but truly, the whole truth rushed on my mind. A horrible idea seized me. Where was Edrid ? could he be dead ? The massy walls of that strong prison seemed to shake, from the quivering of my flesh ; drops of agony burst from every pore. In that awful state—struggling for breath, yet wishing to die—I was aroused by hearing a strain of music come floating on the air. It seemed at some distance. I listened attentively. That voice, once heard, could never be mis-

taken. Nature, in her most lavish moment, had never formed such another. It was Edrid who sung. Edrid lived ! All sorrow for the moment was forgotten.

“I made a spring to rush forward, but fell back powerless. Long I writhed in agony, attempting to regain strength ; but I was reduced to infant weakness. After many efforts I succeeded in getting on my hands and knees, and in that attitude groped my way out of the chamber. Happily the door was open ; and, though my bodily strength was gone, my mental faculties were perfect, and I followed the sound of Edrid’s voice as he chanted a vesper hymn to the Virgin. This added to my distress. It was one dear to the Templar ; and for that cause I had taught it to his son. Oh, how the memory of past bliss increases present woe !

“The passage through which I crept was cut out of the wall. Here and there a dim iron lamp marked the way. Ere I could reach the end of the passage the voice had ceased ; but onward I advanced till I reached a chamber in some respects

similar to the one I had inhabited, though longer and of an oblong form, ending in an alcove of about eight feet square. The front was arched and supported by four slight columns. From the centre hung an argent lamp of Roman fashion, shedding a soft refulgent light. The remainder of the apartment was left in darkness.

“ Within the arch, dressed in the graceful white robes of a novice, confined round the waist by a girdle, to which were suspended a rosary and crucifix, knelt, opposite to an altar adorned with the symbols of Christianity, my son,—his head thrown back, his eyes cast upwards, his hands clasped, and his voice rising in prayer to the Christ; and I heard my name pronounced. My first sentiment was rapture, the next horror. My imagination, ever too vivid, worked another horrible fancy. I felt as if I was a serpent—the serpent SIN—crawling on the earth to check an angel’s flight to heaven.

“ His voice, full of enthusiasm, rose higher. His words were distinct :—‘ Thou God of justice and mercy ! be implored,

take pity on my benighted parent, and awaken her soul to thy Gospel truths. Thus her purified spirit may be translated to the throne of grace and eternity.'

"I sobbed out, 'Oh, Edrid, my son!'

"He rose, raised me in his arms. Our tears intermingled. I faintly uttered, 'Explain! How has all this come to pass?'

"'The Père Lagravare, dear mother, moved with compassion, interceded for us with the Bishop of Beauvais—the high-priest whom I had heard at St. Martin's; and nightly he came here, explaining to me the goodness of God; and how, as an atonement for man, He, the Christ, died for us on the cross that we may be redeemed. And then, in a few days, seeing my wish to be christened, in the presence of several the Bishop performed the sacred ceremony of my baptism.'

"Here the young proselyte burst forth into an account of the rapture and delight he experienced at being a Christian, extolling the goodness of Beauvais. The genius of my Edrid, heretofore confined to poetic rhapsodies, had in divinity

found a theme worthy of its inspiration.

“At another time the Bishop’s amiability and truly Christian practice, united to my son’s sublime ecstasy, must have perfected the sentiment of Christianity which had so frequently budded in my soul; but then when the life of that divine youth was in danger, I had no room for any other feeling. Still I rejoiced at his having been baptized, aware that the Christian’s hope, founded on faith, under any extremity proves a never-failing support. However it was not my purpose to reconcile the proselyte to suffering and death. From those I would protect my idol,—yea, by any means. So far from applauding, I abused indiscriminately all those connected with our imprisonment.

“‘You wrong these Christians, mother,’ he replied. ‘Influenced by the Père Lagravare—a man well known in France, not only as a physician, but an instructor of youth—those appropriated, as they term it, to be the ministers of Christ—oh! if my life is spared, how gladly shall I take up the cross to work in the vineyard of my Lord! My

dear mother, you look impatient. Enough, then, owing to the Père's representation, not only Beauvais, but his brother, Enguerand Marigni, Minister of France, takes an interest in our fate. Oh! blessed, thrice blessed, was the time I first entered the fane of St. Martin's, awakening my spirit to the existence of God—the true, the living God, Father of all. In the words of Beauvais, supported by faith, death for me has lost its sting—the grave its victory.' He clasped his hands in ecstasy.

“ ‘And can you thus so easily part from me, Edrid? Your mother, alas!’

“ ‘Mother, oh be a Christian!’ he exclaimed, with fervour; ‘then our separation will be short, our reunion eternal. All this the Bishop has assured me. Nay more, I am convinced of its solemn truth.’

“Not heeding his enthusiasm, I said, ‘If, indeed, the Minister of France interests himself, you are sure to escape. Then we can speak of the Christian's heaven. While your life is in danger, angels could not divert my thoughts from the engrossing fear.’

“He sighed profoundly, grasped my hand, and said, ‘O my mother, you would not in my soul extinguish the light which even on its confines illumines the darkness of the tomb. It were evil, and you are good. Such have I ever found you.’

“‘Well, well! no more, my son. You love truth. Say what hopes of your escape. These boasted friends are in power. You must not—shall not die!’ I shrieked; and through the long passages of the prison-house echo reverberated the wail of anguish, which I had not strength to suppress.

“‘My dear mother,’ he said caressingly, ‘your grief is my fear—not death. These men in power would do all to save me, even at great risk to themselves; but Hubert Clisson insists on a public trial. Nothing will convince him of my innocence of crime when my act was guilty.’

“As he spoke the Bishop of Beauvais abruptly entered. I drew back from the alcove in confusion.

“Edrid rushed forward and embraced him. Humbled, abashed, I had no power to speak, still had not strength of limbs suffi-

cient to retire. I expected scorn—reproof. Not so. This pure-minded man, benevolence beaming in his open countenance, approached; assisted me to a bench; then expatiated on the blessing which Christianity had conferred on Edrid. ‘And you, afflicted one,’ he said, placing my hand between his, ‘must also be one of us. There is great joy in heaven when a benighted soul returns to its Creator.’ Thus by gentleness and persuasion for half-an-hour he strove to win me to his divine purpose of heavenly thoughts and blessed hopes.

“Encouraged by such kindness, I explained my misery—my idolatry of Edrid. The Bishop positively shed tears; and assured me that no pains to preserve Edrid’s life should be spared; then he remarked on the god-like nature of my son, to whom he experienced a parent’s affection.

“ ‘His indifference to death—moreover to a horrible one,’ he added, ‘surprises and afflicts me. Do you, his mother, know aught of Christianity?’

“I answered, ‘Theoretically I am inti-

mately conversant with its doctrines. Good prelate, save Edrid's life, then guide me to your pious will.'

" 'I must pray to God,' said Beauvais, 'if He thinks fitting to spare his life. Yet now Edrid is inspired and devoted, if he lives; the germs of strong passions are in him, and their temptations may conquer his present godliness.'

" Well, Longris," said Freida, "in the desolation of my grief, let me do justice to Beauvais: he would have saved my son; if all the ministers of Christ were like unto him, then all would, methinks, be Christians."

"Wave these discussions," angrily observed Gaultier; "they waste time."

"Week after week my son's trial was postponed. This delay suited the views of all parties. If Edrid was found guilty, then the Bishop of Beauvais must be fully acquitted, and De Valois covered with shame. Consequently, the Count used every subterfuge to prevent matters being brought to a conclusion. And the Marigni brothers hoped to influence royalty, or, it might be,

the Pope, to uphold the youth, after his crime was proved. That it would be, no doubt was entertained.

“Still more exalted views than his proselyte’s life urged the Bishop. He perceived that Edrid, though sincere in his new faith, betrayed too much of enthusiasm and rapture ; and he wished his belief in Christ to be fixed on the rock of reason and a connexion of the irrefragable truths of the Gospel. ‘The birds soon pick away the seeds scattered on a fruitful but shallow soil,’ sighed the good prelate.

“Meantime our position was rendered comfortable. Besides my apartment and the oratory, Edrid had one appropriated to himself ; and these being all in a separate tower, only connected to the remainder of the building by a long passage leading to the northern turret, we enjoyed undisturbed companionship, and our wants were liberally supplied. We owed this to the Bishop, who, in the Christian view of reforming us, spent a part of every evening in our presence. Generally, from a press of business, the night was advancing ere he ar-

rived. Once or twice a-week the Provost came to our apartments, affecting an interest, and conversing with me. Though sarcastic, he was eloquent and cunning; and gradually he had won me on to relate the principal events of my life. But though easily deceived, and naturally candid, I never alluded to the Templars, or to who had been the father of my son; for this secrecy I had vowed to D'Auvergne. Then, until his one-and-twentieth year, Edrid was to be kept in ignorance. My communications with the Provost were alone; for, unlike his usually benevolent nature, Edrid imbibed such a horror of the Provost, that, on seeing him, he would grow pale, shudder, then glide out of the apartment, and not return until the Provost retired. Undoubtedly I was indiscreet in speaking so freely of the past to this disciple of Mammon.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ And treasuring in his mind
All he heard mentioned, from the tent retired ;
Some deep dark plot he clearly saw designed,
Some plot that was not thus to have transpired.”

TASSO.

“ONE evening about five weeks after our removal to the Provost’s, as I sat alone, Edrid having retired to his devotions, I was startled by seeing the Provost enter accompanied by a stranger superbly clad, having on a Flemish cloak embroidered round the edge with a foliage of gold and pearl. It was fastened on the shoulders by large buttons studded with diamonds. The bearing of the stranger was noble, and his face must have been termed beautiful, only for the expression of pride and scorn. Accustomed to the manners of the great, though still weak, I rose, and with dignity received

him. My dress, too, though stripped of its gold and jewels, being the one in which I had travelled, was of rich materials, and displayed the graceful drapery of an Eastern lady of distinction. He looked surprised, spoke in a low voice to the Provost, who, lowly bowing, retired, closing, but not fastening, the door after him.

“ Addressing me, the stranger said, ‘ I had scarcely expected to meet in a Jongleur so much of courtesy ; you appear of noble birth. There is some mystery—explain.’ ”

“ ‘ There is no mystery, noble sir, I belong to the horde termed Jongleurs ; we are an outcast race, little known and never respected.’ ”

“ He looked intently into my face. I felt the blood rise to my cheeks, but I met his gaze without confusion.

“ ‘ Are you a Christian ?’ he demanded, sternly.

“ ‘ Not so, noble sir ; I am no Christian, nor yet a Pagan, for I place no faith in idols.’ ”

“ ‘ This,’ he gloomily observed, ‘ is un-

fortunate, as it leaves no means of vowing you to the secrecy absolutely necessary ; had you been a Christian an oath would be inviolable.' He touched a crucifix of chased gold, which by a rich chain of the same metal hung round his neck, kept however beneath the tunic ; he had just then pulled it out.

"I felt an expression of scorn passing over my countenance at this self-deception. Well I knew many of the Christians to be false and dissolute. The greater crime, because the God they worshipped was immaculate in holiness, while those idols which my people worshipped were nothing but ideal embodiments of human passions. I checked the expression of scorn—it had been ill-timed.

"Then the stranger said, ' You have a son, he has committed sacrilege. Are you a fond mother ? Would you preserve him from a painful death ? hopeless of eternity, the wretched offspring of a Pagan should doubly value present existence.'

"I cast myself at his feet in ecstasy, ex-

claiming, 'Noble chief, oh! act a Christian's blessed part. Save my son, and command me as a slave.'

" 'Is there any form that you reverence by which I can bind you, to prove that, though you should be submitted to the ordeal of fire and of water, you will not, by word, look, or gesture, betray my confidence?'

" Prostrating myself at his feet, I went through the mystic signs by which the initiated of our people bind themselves; at the same time observing the Jongleurs hold a promise thus enforced by ancient forms so solemn, that to save the world from being reduced to its original chaos, they would not violate it; no, not the most corrupt among them. More of our belief I cannot explain—dare not.

" 'Ha!' he interrupted, 'these signs are magical, and emanate from sorcery.'

" Hoping that the idea of my possessing magical influence might render me of more importance in his eyes, and thus enlarge the means of saving Edrid, I did not gainsay his words, but assumed an air of mystery.

“ ‘It is well,’ he said; yet I observed that his cheek paled, and his lip trembled : ‘It is well, but trebly cursed shall be the enemy who subjects me to this crime and humiliation. Then, woman, to save your son, have you courage to implicate yourself in the deeds of sorcery? If so, in the first place, relate to me briefly, but clearly, without equivocation, the whole facts of this sacrilege up to the present moment.’

“I rose from the ground, and spoke with energy and calmness, ‘Chief, in the first place, there is no accusation however degrading, — no torture however great, to which I will not bow my spirit, and commit my body, to save my son’s life!’ I then succinctly repeated the circumstances attending the vase, until as prisoners we had been removed to the Provost’s; then I dwelt more fully on the Bishop of Beauvais’s Christian efforts, and how he nightly visited my son, and had interested the Marigni in his favour. As I spoke a glow of triumphant joy, perfectly demoniacal in its expression, lighted up the chief’s countenance; he held forth his crucifix, saying, ‘Woman, understandest thou this?’

“ ‘ Yes, noble sir ; it is a crucifix, and symbolical of the Saviour’s atonement.’

“ ‘ Wonderful,’ he muttered, ‘ the Provost is right. This Jongleur has great knowledge. Enough ; I see you understand. Now, I solemnly swear on this, that if you betray my confidence, this Edrid whom you so ardently love shall be consumed to death by slow fire, and that in your presence ; and think not that the Bishop of Beauvais,—nay, not all the priests in Christendom, can save him when I have sworn his death. Woman ! know you who I am ?’

“ I answered, ‘ Not farther than that your splendid attire and noble presence bespeak high birth.’

“ ‘ Then behold in me Charles Count de Valois, brother to the last, uncle to the present King of France ; and learn that though these monarchs sat on the throne, I have, and do wield the sceptre. Let this knowledge convince you that my will is absolute ; so if you support me in my present views, I swear that neither you nor your son shall be injured.’

“ I felt shocked beyond measure at find-

ing that I was in the power of Charles de Valois, the successful persecutor of the Templars; he, too, who as an illustration of his belief in sorcery, had condemned two of the Jongleurs to death; and the pleasure which the most distant prospect of Edrid's escape had awakened in my bosom vanished when I found the hope rested on Charles de Valois, justly deemed the proudest and cruellest noble within the French dominions, —a very Lucifer in pride and revenge.

“ He seemed to penetrate my thoughts, for he scornfully said, ‘ You must be aware that in this interview that I am not like the Bishop of Beauvais, seeking the redemption of a pair of sacrilegious paupers, who by right should feed the flames’—I shuddered—‘ but I have heard strange tidings of your hordes, that they are well acquainted with traditions long lost to the Christians, and through them understand many forbidden things; and in your communications with the Provost, you acknowledged having a brother well versed in the mysterious worship of the Egyptians, also understanding astrology and other prescient know-

ledge. Now of all things I most wish to learn where this brother of yours, so strangely gifted, is to be found ; for know my arch enemy, Enguerand de Marigni, has in his employment, under the guise of a secretary, a man well versed in the black arts of magic, and by such devilish means can controvert my best-laid plans of ambition or vengeance. This, to me, is a source of constant uneasiness ; now if I could win over this brother of yours, he might be still better versed in these forbidden arts than even Jacques de Lor, the Minister's secretary.'

"Yielding to joyful surprise, I clapped my hands, exclaiming, 'Said you Jacques de Lor? oh! he is my brother; and shall I again meet one so dear? Then my son and I, even in sad extremity, have one true and natural friend.'

"'Marigni's secretary your brother! Ah! this is fortunate,' cried De Valois; 'it will place the power over these enemies in my hands. Now, woman, mark me, and act as I advise; and not only shall you and your son be saved from death, but be granted

ample means, so that you and he may retire to any country you select,—for of necessity you must leave France. Do you promise to obey, and that implicitly, what I may require of you? There must be no hesitation.

“ ‘Until I know what is required,’ I spoke with a spirit that surprised the proud Count, ‘Charles de Valois, I cannot bind myself by a promise; there must be full confidence between us.’

“ At first he looked irritated at my presumption; then disdainfully said, ‘You dare not oppose me; already by your own confession you have acknowledged Jacques de Lor as your brother, and him I suspect to be a practiser of the dark art; and you are a Pagan and Jongleur; and your son stands charged with the crime of sacrilege, the penalty for such crimes is death in its most fearful form, and with me of all France alone lies the power to release you from this danger. Speak! will you obey my commands? Safety and wealth to you all shall be the reward of my gratitude.’

“ ‘Speak your wishes, Charles de Valois; secure to me the safety of Edrid, and though

it were to plunge my wretched body into the blazing pyre, I obey.' I spoke this with stern determination.

"‘That were a useless trouble,’ he answered, with scorn; ‘a waste of our princely time and influence to direct our mind to the compassing of a vagrant’s death; Charles de Valois seeks nobler game. I HATE’—he actually hissed out the word through his closed teeth—‘I HATE Enguerand de Marigni with deadly hatred! Listen, woman, and attend;’ as he spoke he stamped up and down the apartment, ‘That vile Norman, being Minister of France, first in the presence of the King and the assembly of Peers, boldly accused me of having embezzled the public money, and when I contradicted the charge, he gave me, Charles de Valois, the lie! Woman! well may you look surprised;—I say he gave me, Charles de Valois, the lie in full assembly; and, by the living God, I swear, though my soul pays the penalty, I will hurl destruction on him and his whole family, nor youth or sex shall be spared! All of the Marigni shall perish!’

“His fury rose beyond description, he

foamed at the mouth, every vein in his forehead swelled to bursting. I have witnessed many scenes of violence, but none to equal his ; it terrified, subdued me. After a time, struggling to conquer his passion, he, though with a countenance dark as the hell he dared to set at defiance, addressed me, saying, ‘Jongleur, I have discovered that you belong not to the race of beings one meets every day, being possessed of no distinctive quality beyond the shade of their complexions or fashion of their head-gear ; and the Provost acquaints me that you possess learning sufficient to confound our gownsmen and priests—no difficult matter,’ he added, scornfully, ‘as some of the latter cannot read their breviaries ; still more, that you can explain this knowledge in various tongues ; moreover, being a disbeliever, there is nothing for you to hope or fear beyond immediate events ; should your deeds be evil, no need of repentance or submitting to the penance of torture ; thus to my commands you can offer none of those objections which might influence the piety of a Christian. So listen attentively, and obey me to

the very extremity of my wishes. Remember, the life or death of your son lies with me.'

" 'Charles de Valois,' I interrupted, 'by your own reasoning, the present being my all becomes more valuable. Now my all of love—of life, is concentrated in my son; and ere I listen to your commands, swear, that if in all things I bind myself to your purpose, you shall protect him from injury. Heretofore, proud Prince, you have only striven to terrify me by threats, now, else you condescend to win me by promises, I will prove what you just now declared, that I am of no common description! My fixedness of purpose equals yours.'

" Surprised at the freedom of my address, he replied, 'Have I not said that your son should not be injured? what more, woman, do you require?'

" 'Yes, noble lord, but you spoke the promise carelessly as a thing of little import, while you vehemently swore to your revenge on the Marigni; and know that vicissitude and suffering have taught me caution, as well as endurance and penetration.'

" I heard him mutter, 'For my business

she should have spirit; and the soaring eagle ever suited my taste better than the cooing dove;’ then he spoke aloud, ‘Jongleur, attend to my explanation, name your reward for assisting me, then I pledge my princely word not to fail your son.’ And here the Valois entered fully into the particulars of his quarrel with Enguerand Marigni,—his perfect joy when he hoped to cast the obloquy of the sacrilege on the Bishop of Beauvais, admitting that not for a moment did he credit a report so preposterous as that of the prelate having embezzled the sacred vase,—an act, of which no one but a madman or a child could have been guilty. After expatiating upon his vexation when the treasure was discovered, he proceeded to say, ‘that the Marigni’s brothers were so esteemed in France, and so respected by Louis Hutin, and, to confess the truth, were so talented and honourable in their different departments, that justly to criminate any act of theirs was an impossibility; but the crimes of magic and of heresy were intangible; therefore he (Charles de Valois) as the only means of revenge, would accuse them

of those vile practices.' And the Count added, triumphantly, 'When in the same way I brought the Templars, so powerful, to death, and annihilated their Order, I need not despair of hurling destruction on the Marigni.'

"I shuddered, but made no reply.

"'In respect of the Marigni,' he proceeded, 'I have a tangible proof—one which confounds me; by the assistance of Jacques de Lor, the Minister forms figures bearing such a strong resemblance to the originals as that they only require animation to appear the person or persons whom they represent; more of these anon. Now what I would learn is, where these images are deposited; I can adduce witnesses of veracity to prove that one of these 'works of men's hands' was last night taken out of the Marigni's house, it being placed in a chest, of a coffin shape; beyond this I cannot learn. I shall relate the fact. Hoping to glean a knowledge of some act of the Marigni that might tend to his disadvantage, I employed spies to wander nightly about his palace; they it was who saw this chest borne

out—one of its bearers stumbled—the lid being loose, fell off—my spies beheld either a corpse or image. Apprehensive of some spell or sorcery, in place of following up their discovery, the caitiffs fled to acquaint me. Well, they have met their reward in the punishment inflicted—but no more of these dastards. Now from these mysterious proceedings of the Minister of France, and his harbouring the magician Jacques de Lor, I have woven a web of vengeance from which, if you assist, the Marigni cannot escape. Already, through my partisans, I have had it reported throughout Paris that Hubert Clisson and the Bishop of Beauvais, to cover their sacrilege, had bribed a pair of paupers to take the crime on themselves. Jongleur, you have such quick comprehension, that you will at once perceive my whole scheme. Having no respect for Christianity, you need not hesitate to swear by an oath that Hubert Clisson and the Bishop of Beauvais, assisted by the Père Lagravare, in the extremity of your want, by bribes and threats, had won you and Edrid over to admit yourselves guilty of a crime of which

you were perfectly innocent,—of course your son must support the evidence; also mention that the Bishop nightly came expressly to support you in your resolution, but now, suspecting that they had only treacherously seduced you on to cloak their own guilt, and would ultimately sacrifice you to their safety, you were compelled, by love to your son, and from the impulse of self-preservation, to expose the whole truth. Observe, woman! this is Tuesday, the seventeenth, and on Friday next, which will be the twentieth, Edrid must stand his trial for sacrilege, and, if condemned, you know the penalty—he dies on the scaffold of Montfaucon, else by fire. Now mark me! be but true to my directions, so as to aid me in my just revenge, and I swear, by the living God, to save Edrid's life, though the whole of Paris condemn him. The power, happily, lies with me.'

"I shuddered; for though my time had been spent among the wild and dissolute, and I was uninfluenced by the exalted principles preached by the Christian priests, I was not accustomed to the hypocrisy of such

dark intrigues. The schemes of the Jongleurs seldom extended beyond the means of evading laws for which they had no respect ; and for the brave Templars, they carried all with too high a hand to stoop to the meanness of petty deceptions which their haughty nature despised, although, as typical of the Temple to which they had devoted themselves, they shaded their spiritual observances from the public eye with an impenetrable veil. To scenes of pride, intemperance, and violence, I had been inured ; but by nature candid and courageous, I shrank from the plots of cold-blooded, calculating villany urged on by revenge and cruelty.

“De Valois watched every variation of my countenance and discovered my hesitation ; but long-practised policy taught him to overlook it ; and he proceeded as if he supposed my silence resulted from a contemplation of his plans : ‘ Woman,’ he said ; and though his voice was authoritative, it was insinuating,—nay tender, ‘ I shall prove that there is no doubt of my success, and consequently of your son’s acquittal. I have won, I should say purchased, the Provost to my

purpose. I love,' he added scornfully, 'these worshippers of Mammon; they are ever accessible to corruption. There is no feeling of the human heart so potent and exclusive as avarice: before it, all the gentler and loftier sentiments fade, wither, vanish. Strange that amidst profusion the miser denies himself sufficient aliment to support his withering frame. Well, thanks to the Saints, as it supports our cause, the Provost is the prince of misers, scattering with a niggard's hand the crumbs to his familiars the rats,'—he gave a satanic laugh, and then proceeded,—'Having paid due tribute to this grovelling demon, he at once contrived to have you and your son removed here in place of the dungeons of the common prison, which else had been your fate; and since then has carefully noted down every circumstance,—namely, your illness, Edrid's enthusiasm, and the Bishop of Beauvais' visits; more particularly a strange event which occurred, and to which as yet we have found no clue.—Attend.'

“And as he spoke, De Valois fixed his eyes sternly on me. ‘Last Friday night the

prelate you so esteem entered your son's apartment, and he was accompanied by a stranger, so closely masked and disguised, that none could distinguish his features or form beyond his being tall. Having fastened the door of the chamber very carefully, they continued within for several hours, as they supposed, unobserved, but were watched by the Provost, who, at my desire, granted Beauvais full access to his penitent. Well, the following evening the Provost, with affected carelessness, inquired of Edrid, had anything disturbed him during the night, as noises had proceeded from his apartment? Edrid replied, with a simplicity which attested his truth, that he had slept unusually sound—a heavy slumber like unto one who had taken a soporific—still, that he had an imperfect idea that some person had examined his limbs and washed his face. ‘It must be fancy,’ he said; ‘or, probably, as my mind constantly reverts to my approaching death, my troubled thoughts suggested that they were preparing my body for interment; and now I recollect,’ he added, ‘my hair when I awoke was full of some aromatic oil.

So, probably, my hapless parent took advantage of my deep rest to perform some of the forbidden rites of her people, into whose mysteries I have never been initiated, consequently cannot explain.'

"Here I impatiently interrupted De Valois with assurances that, until then, I was ignorant of the fact, which was beyond my comprehension.

" 'But I can comprehend it,' he retorted, 'the person who accompanied the Bishop was none other but the vile magician, Jacques de Lor, the creature of Enguerand Margni,—by some of his unearthly demoniacal arts he hopes to subvert my plans. Fool, none ever yet succeeded against Charles de Valois.' I was going to speak, but he silenced me by vehemently exclaiming, 'This man, this accursed magician, is your brother, probably ignorant of your being in Paris. Hubert Clisson, in advancing to the King his evidence against your son, said that you had acknowledged to him that you had been called by several names. Nay, presume not to interrupt me,' for again I would have

spoken. ‘Ever remember, it is your province to attend and to obey ; mine to command. Woman—sorceress, say, what are you most generally termed ?’

“ I answered meekly ; for my haughty, reckless spirit shrank before this demon of pride and beauty : ‘Freida de Lor is my right name, for the Saxons, in their northern distinctions, were among the first to assume surnames ; but among the tribe I was called by the more masculine title of Girion, given to me by my brother Jacques in respect of my acting the part of the Augur in a masque he got up to amuse some Teutonic Knights who objected in their sanctity to moralities on sacred subjects as connected with Christianity.’

“ ‘Ha, then !’ he cried with vivacity, ‘there is another magician among you—this Girion.’

“ ‘Excuse me, noble Prince, Girion was the soothsayer of the Roman patriot Brutus, who lived long before the Christian Saviour descended on earth, or that the Pagans were scattered like chaff before the wind, or con-

sumed like unto stubble. Alas for our wretched people, once the great ones of this changeable world !’

“ ‘You seem learned,’ he said, ‘in obsolete knowledge, useless except as it may be employed to the furtherance of your dark forbidden art. Say, can you read and write?’

“ ‘Both, and in seven languages, most potent Prince,’ I answered proudly.

“ ‘It is well,’ he replied, ‘rest thee then, Freida,’ he said in gentler accents, ‘while I repair to the Provost for materials ; and if during my absence your son enters, dismiss him without alluding to me, as our interviews require secrecy.’ He then opened the door, but started back on hearing a rich strain of music ; it was a vesper hymn to the Virgin, which my hapless son, under the inspiration of his newly-adopted faith, chaunted, accompanying his melodious voice with the cithern. He must have learned the hymn in Paris.”

“Repeat the words, Freida,” interrupted Longris ; “for there was a touching sweetness in his lament after Judea which awakened

my sympathy. How came Edrid to have his cithern in prison ? ”

“ He was permitted the indulgence,” replied Freida, “ by the kind interference of Beauvais. Here read the words ”—drawing a book from her bosom. She pointed out a page on the vellum.

“ Sweetly gleam those eyes before me,
As when first their softness stole,
Showerlike descending o’er me ;
Till the midnight of my soul
Grew daylight beautiful to see :
Mater Christi ! Mater Christi !
Gracious Maid of Galilee.

Who can tell thy bitter anguish,
In thy Son’s dark hour of death,
When thou saw’st the Eternal languish,
When upon his hovering breath
Rose the voice of agony :
Mater Christi ! Mater Christi !
Gracious Maid of Galilee ?

Still ! oh ! still I see thee kneeling,
’Mid some palm-grove’s shadows dim,
From thy parted lip is stealing,
Through the eve thy vesper hymn,
Thy virgin’s spirit melody :
Mater Christi ! Mater Christi !
Gracious Maid of Galilee.

As an anthem uncompleted,
That in sorrow seems to close,
As a rainbow, as when greeted
By the sun then stately rose—
Such it was thy lot to be,

Mater Christi ! Mater Christi !
Gracious Maid of Galilee.”

“ While Edrid poured forth this hymn, De Valois, who was passionately fond of music, and who performed with skill and taste on several instruments, seemed perfectly enraptured, expressing delight by his gestures. His next act was strange, and, accustomed as I had been to human inconsistency and self-deception, awakened my surprise. He, a Christian by profession, and of necessity bound to renounce the revengeful feelings, which amidst my Pagan race were considered not only excusable, but in some of our rituals laid down as a religious obligation, had just been planning a tissue of criminal falsehoods for the destruction of those whom he admitted to be so exemplary as to set truth at defiance ; yet now he sank on his knees, drew forth a chaplet, and turning towards

me in contemptuous accents, exclaimed, 'Woman, infidel wretch ! retire and remain silent while I pray.' I stepped to a recess, and he commenced his devotions with every appearance of sincere piety—his deep sonorous voice joining in the *Mater Christi*, &c. Alas ! I sighed ; and if my Edrid is spared, will the Divine faith which now exalts his pure spirit above the sufferings of humanity, decompose itself into such obvious corruption, to acknowledge and believe in the influence of good angels, and still act up to the instigations of demoniacal passions ? You sneer, Longris, at this sentiment in one who has rejected Christianity, but in all things my mind is capable of discerning the sublime and beautiful ; and if I have not adopted your holy tenets, it is because I would not bow before an altar, hallowed by its purity, until I eradicated from my soul earth's pollutions ; and woe is me, my strength was never equal to the combat, and now I am sworn to the infernal deities of my race—to the wereregilds—blood for blood ! ”

“Infidel,” cried Longris, “dare not to

“speak again on sacred subjects with your polluted breath; forget you that I am an anointed priest of the Christian faith.”

Freida cast on him a look of bitter scorn, muttered some words, then proceeded with her relation.

“When the hymn concluded, De Valois rose; and now his astonishment increased;—for his evening devotions concluded, Edrid sung one of his favourite laments of Judah. Ardent in all his feelings, De Valois’ rapture rose to ecstasy; now he would not breathe lest he might lose a single note, but remained entranced with his hands clasped and his eyes closed, to concentrate every sense into hearing: then his emotion conquered him, and he actually sobbed with pleasure. ‘Freida,’ he cried, ‘I had heard of the musical powers of this boy, but imagination failed in doing justice to talents almost superhuman. This Edrid must not die, no; he shall live in my palace. Princes shall envy me my minstrel. O woman! listen to him,—listen to that voice of harmony and love, it will teach you to perform any act, and stoop to every device, to save a life so pre-

cious from its genius—true minstrel of the Divine art.’

“ The music ceased; flushed with delight, panting from excitement, De Valois quitted my apartment. In less than an hour he returned bearing materials for writing, the tenderness which sympathy with the melody had awakened was fled; and his bearing, if possible, more haughty and dictatorial than ever. Addressing me hastily, he said, ‘ I have loitered in your prison beyond my hour. Beauvais will be here presently, and I would not, by my hopes of success, have him suspect my visit; so quick, take these, and indite a few words to Jacques de Lor. Tell him to be here to-morrow evening; and, to give the necessary appearance of secrecy and difficulty to your appointment, enclose this signet of the Provost’s, and say, that by showing it he will gain admittance, that a friend had stolen the signet for the purpose, and that evil consequences would result if the Provost or his sergeants should discover your interview. Such is the substance of my commands, shape them in any manner you approve.’

“I took the vellum. In so doing, I looked into the Count’s face where the tender expression awakened by prayer and music had vanished, ill replaced by the stern lines of hatred and revenge.

“‘Why lookest thou so intently?’ he exclaimed. ‘By the living Christ, thou infidel, I suspect thou wilt deceive me; and the cruelty of man has not yet devised the torture to which you shall be submitted. To clerks and priests, we nobles leave the arts of learning, so I cannot read what you may write.’ But I stopped him suddenly, by calmly saying, ‘Noble Prince, I shall not deceive you: but ere I write deign to explain what is to be the result of my meeting with De Lor.’

“‘It is well, Freida—now observe. Elicit from De Lor all you can of the Minister Marigni; his views, his politics, his plans, his pursuits; every circumstance, however trivial in itself, sheds a light on the character, and I would sound the very depths of my enemy’s soul. But, Freida, above all, it is essential for me to know the uses of these waxen figures of which I have spoken, and

also where they are deposited. One word more ere I depart ; I shall have Edrid's trial on Friday next. Remember his destiny rests on yourself.'

" 'Oh ! in mercy,' I exclaimed, 'grant more time, but a week—a short week.'

" 'To what purpose?' he haughtily demanded ; 'act with decision, and you may ensure your son's acquittal. If you mean to be treacherous, the sooner he is brought to punishment the better ; for my plans are irreversible as those of Providence ; and I am impatient to have this business over. Nothing but my thirst of vengeance could have reconciled me to such conferences as the present, and those I am compelled to hold with the Provost, and again with others inferior to you in intellect, and to our noble *chef des rats* in position ;' he gave his scornful laugh, and was retiring with majestic step, when I exclaimed, 'Noble Prince, in all things you may command me, for I am a pre-doomed wretch ; but I much fear that neither the duty nor affection which Edrid bears to me will reconcile him to falsify his word or implicate the innocent. From infancy the

hand of nature placed the impress of truth on his spirit; and the lofty sentiment has been nourished and strengthened by a Persian who instructed his youth.'

"The Count cast on me his look of ineffable scorn, and said, 'Have the Christian tenets of your son so lately adopted inspired him with such virtue? By the Saints, infidel, thou thinkest to deceive me. An infidel possess truth,—pshaw!'

"I answered with decision: 'Edrid tells me that Christianity has elevated his soul to the hopes of a blessed hereafter; but ere he had heard the Bishop of Beauvais preach of the Saviour God, he disdained falsehood; and though gentle as a lamb, his soul possesses a nobility which shrinks from meanness; and unhappily for me he has no fear of death to conquer his virtue.'

"With a sneer the Valois retorted: 'Thou most sublime of vagrants! in a merrier mood, your solemn consequence, and the halo of virtue you affect to shed round the character of your sacrilegious son, would amuse me, for I love to mark the vanities and self-delusions of the human mind; but at present

more serious subjects engross my thoughts. When the action approaches I may not pause to re-select the weapons I have chosen ; enough for me, that with an unflinching hand I wield them to my purpose. You are fully aware of your son's position, and of my wishes. Act in opposition to the latter, and you know the consequences ; to dwell on them would be a waste of time and words ; nay, presume not to interrupt me,' for I essayed to speak,—‘ but hasten your writing to this De Lor. I must see to his receiving it. One observation I shall add,—your son's musical genius interests me, and if he escapes death he shall reside as minstrel in my palace.’

“ Without answering I handed the vellum to De Valois. Never had I felt so depressed and abashed, though I had so frequently sat and danced in the company of the highest potentates of Europe or Asia.

“ ‘ What are the contents?’ he proudly demanded. I offered to read the writing aloud, but he said, ‘ It is needless ; merely repeat the substance of your request, and dare not to equivocate.’

“ ‘My words were few, noble Prince,’ I answered, ‘having merely apprised De Lor of my being here, and that the prisoner who had awakened such a general interest is my son Edrid; and that in this sad extremity I wish to see him, my brother, my early companion, and constant friend; that, owing to the interest of a powerful stranger, I had found means of sending him this scroll, also the signet. Noble Count, Jacques will not disappoint, he has ever loved me.’

“ ‘It is well,’ exclaimed De Valois, as, taking the vellum, he retired with his haughty step and elevated carriage.

CHAPTER IX.

“ Who could believe what strange bug-bears,
Mankind creates itself of fears
That spring like fern, that insect weed,
Equivocally, without seed ;
And have no possible foundation,
But merely in th’ imagination :
And yet can do more dreadful feats
Than hags with all their imps and teats :
Make more bewitch and haunt themselves
Than all the nursery of elves,
For fear does things so like a witch,
’Tis hard to unriddle which is which.”

HUDIBRAS.

“ ANXIOUSLY passed the following day ; I heard a water-clock strike seven. Edrid, aware that I was displeased with him, had never quitted my side the whole afternoon, in his gentle voice saying everything he

thought likely to soothe, and with angelic purpose striving to win my thoughts to Heaven. Soon as I heard the hour I started up, and in a petulant voice exclaimed, 'Leave me, boy; except indeed your disobedience leads you to the length of denying me even the solitude of my apartment.' He would have tarried to apologise, but I called out, 'Edrid, lest you provoke me to greater anger—away—away!' He looked sadly, reproachfully at me, but retired without further opposition. A few moments after, Jacques de Lor entered, and springing forward embraced me with the utmost tenderness; like my ill-fated son, Jacques was full of affection, enthusiasm, and truth.

"Aware of my own treachery, I was much affected by this proof of my brother's affection, and it was some time before I summoned courage to address him; his appearance was even more mysterious than formerly, his dress little altered except that the flowing mantle was now of black Damascus silk wrought with silver into the forms of several of the constellations. This robe was a gift from Marigni, and although

it was then usual to have the sacerdotal robes of the clergy embroidered with the figures of animals, still it was subsequently brought as an evidence against De Lor. Indeed the unfortunate man appeared to me to be slightly demented by his unearthly pursuits. How far he studied magic as to discovering its secrets, it is not for me to say ; but one thing is certain, the spirits he invoked must have been the tutelary gods, for he was humane and exalted in his views.

“ At first I questioned De Lor relative to our parent ; he told me that the Amazonian was then in England, but that he had not seen her for some time in consequence of a violent quarrel that had arisen between them ;—he having united himself, according to the manner of his horde, to a very lovely young Hindoo dancer, who had, with others from Mysore, joined the Saxon Jongleurs. ‘ I fear,’ added Jacques, ‘ that the curse my parent denounced on our union has taken effect, for Charles Count de Valois having seen my beautiful Hindoo perform in the dance, and in Eastern fashion accompanying her movements by playing on the cymbals, has become

enamoured of her; and she who pays no deference to rank, but is regulated by her sympathies, rejected his overtures with disdain. Fortunately as yet he takes her for a virgin; thus for the time, I have escaped the vengeance of that despotic prince, that monster of revenge and cruelty.'

"I now entered into an account of Edrid and myself, our shipwreck, his sacrilege,—in short, all I have related to you, excepting my interview with Charles de Valois. He listened to me with much attention and then said, 'I had heard of Edrid, but had no conception that he was your son;' as he spoke he buried his face in his hands, and I saw him shudder. Immediately I took the alarm, and exclaimed, 'Jacques, you think there is no hope of his escape, but I still nourish one; I could not thus speak if I admitted the belief that he would be doomed to a violent death.'

"He answered, 'No, Freida, of the present danger to Edrid I am ignorant; but a sad prophecy depresses my spirit. I recall to remembrance, Freida, the visit you paid to the tribe when we were encamped on the

banks of the Aa. My Egyptian tutor in astrology was then with me ; I requested of him to cast Edrid's horoscope, for his knowledge was in fact preternatural in its magnitude. He obeyed my wish, and, to our mutual horror, discovered that you my sister would prove the means of subjecting your son to heavy sorrow and great danger ; nay, to threatening the loss of life. More the Egyptian could not discover. He has died since.'

" ' Well, Jacques,' I replied cheerfully, ' he made a mistake. It proves the reverse, for by my means Edrid will be spared from sorrow, and though his valuable life is in danger, he will by me be saved from death ; for I have confidence in a chief of great power who has warranted to protect my son.'

" De Lor's nature was full of tenderness, free from the fiercer passions of his Saxon parent or myself ; seeing my wild affliction, he strove to inspire me with hope by explaining how deeply the Bishop of Beauvais was interested for Edrid, whom he loved with the tenderness of a parent, and proposed to

adopt in the event of his escaping punishment ; and that he had engaged the support of the Minister Enguerand Marigni at the coming trial, adding, ‘ The Minister is as benevolent as the Bishop.’

“ ‘ But,’ I demanded, ‘ should Edrid be found guilty, can they evade the sentence of death ? Can they save him from the gibbet or the flames ?’

“ ‘ Certainly not,’ answered Jacques, ‘ Charles de Valois will attend in person, and his nature is incapable of pity ; I tell thee, Freida, that prince is an incarnation of the evil spirit.’

“ ‘ Yes,’ I exclaimed, ‘ and I too will attend, and proclaim facts that may surprise you, though I invoke to my assistance the forbidden gods of our ancient and now abhorred race.’

“ ‘ Dear sister,’ he said mildly, ‘ avoid the scene of terror, it will only agonise you, and your interference may injure—it cannot save Edrid, he will be surrounded by powerful friends.’

“ ‘ Who will let him perish ?’ I exclaimed.

“ Jacques started, paced up and down

the apartment, then approaching, said, 'This interview with you was not anticipated by me, else I might give you some consolation ; as it is, I am bound to secrecy by this obligation.' And he made the mysterious signs of our horde, ' You know I cannot infringe on them ; but obey me, and Edrid shall be saved. I swear it by every power once worshipped and revered by our people,—yea, during now forgotten ages.'

" 'Speak,' I said, in a voice convulsed with emotion, ' what do you require ? I would sacrifice a thousand lives to preserve Edrid's ; in truth, he is my life, my hope, my all, for here or hereafter.'

" ' Oh ! Freida,' he replied, ' I would not deceive you or him ; all that I desire of you is to remain here and let matters take their course ; the trial will be on Friday, on Sunday you shall know all. And now farewell, trust in me ; I place my trust in honourable men, Beauvais and Marigni.'

" ' Yet stay a moment, DeLor ; you visited my son the other night as he slept, examined his limbs, washed his face, and went through other manœuvres ; of this he was conscious

through his sleep. The Bishop of Beauvais was with you. Speak boldly! Was this a Christian rite, or some incantation of our forbidden mysteries with which I am unacquainted? there must be confidence between us, else we cannot act together.'

"Jacques was much confused, and muttered to himself, 'His sleep should have been more profound.' Then addressing me, he said aloud, 'It was not the Bishop who accompanied me, but Enguerand Marigni in person. Be satisfied, the object of the visit was to save Edrid's life! I cannot be more explicit; have I not just explained that I am bound by sacred obligations to secrecy?'

"I answered with spirit, 'Under the circumstances of my sorrow you should wave this mystery; no obligation should influence you to keep me in ignorance of your plans. Besides, Jacques, only reflect for a moment on the abyss of misery into which the prospect of Edrid's condemnation sinks me, and have pity.' And I threw myself before him weeping.

"'Rise, Freida,' he cried, 'and to-mor-

row evening at this hour I shall be here to relieve your anxiety; for well do I know that the pious Beauvais will grant the permission.'

"I rose in some measure reassured indeed; my being able to reflect or act at all during this period, was owing to my dependence on Charles de Valois, and, let me acknowledge, on my own machiavellian powers. For by what I deemed a bold stroke of policy, I hoped to win over both parties to favour my son, and thus to insure his safety; but the demons of evil whom I wooed, and who ruled over my destiny, subverted all my plans, for they ever gloat and triumph over the misery of their votaries. Again De Lor was retiring when I exclaimed, 'Jacques, I too can penetrate into hidden secrets: what mean those waxen figures you have deposited in such safety?'

"He started, grew deadly pale, and exclaimed,—'Freida, where could you have learned such intelligence? Deal candidly with me, it may save me and others from danger; for, O Freida, more than you can imagine are involved in these waxen images.'

“ ‘I, too, can keep my knowledge to myself ; moreover, being bound by the same obligations that you consider inviolate. But if there is any peril, you will best evade it by reposing the truth in my keeping. Say, then, where are these images deposited, and what their object,—by the risk encountered it must be a grave one.’

“ He resumed his seat, and said ‘ The figures are not mine, but Enguerand Marigni’s, though I have sometimes assisted him in their formation, and procured for him materials.’

“ ‘Do you mean,’ I interrupted, ‘ that those images are the work of the Minister of France ; if so, wherefore is secrecy necessary ? should he not be proud of his talents ?’

“ ‘ You shall hear the particulars, and then, Freida, judge for yourself.’

“ ‘ Some years since, Marigni was staying at a Convent in the neighbourhood of Florence, and to which his uncle was Superior. Now Marigni was, and is, passionately fond of the arts, and even then possessed some knowledge of sculpture, and had studied under a master ; but as his proud patrician

family objected to the employment, as derogatory to his exalted rank, he gave it up. But it is hard to curb a natural genius for any pursuit; consequently, while staying at the Convent, Enguerand was much pleased with a beautiful group representing the Holy Family; it was exquisitely white, and supposing it to be of the purest Parian marble, he remarked to the Superior on the execution and purity of the marble; upon which his uncle explained that the group was formed out of wax, and taking him to a studio, showed him prepared cakes of wax, and numerous moulds and instruments. Much delighted, Marigni set to work and imitated the group to a marvel. In short, after a time, having attained perfection in the art, ere departing from the Convent, he moulded a figure of the Superior,—one excellent in its resemblance, so it was placed in a niche. The whole brotherhood were delighted—when one afternoon the figure suddenly dropped down, and, strange to say, next evening, while performing high mass, the Superior fell dead; and in the confusion it was said, that several of the monks

flew to raise the waxen image, taking it for the corpse. Much grieved for his uncle, Marigni returned to France. His genius soon raised him to be the Chamberlain of Philip le Bel ; and as Enguerand's recreation was the forming of these waxen images, he resolved to mould one of the King to present to the Queen-mother. At this period, by circumstances too tedious to be enumerated, I became acquainted with Marigni, and the high-minded Minister admitted into his noble breast a sentiment of friendship for the humble Jongleur whom he considered talented.

“ ‘The likeness of the statue to the King was surpassing, but still, being of alabaster whiteness, it appeared like unto the dead. Proud of his work, Marigni presented it to the Queen-mother, who gratefully received it ; alas ! soon after, Philip le Bel came to his death by a fall from his horse while hunting. The Queen-mother, in deep woe, imputed the sad event to the summons of the Grand Master to her son commanding him to appear before the throne of grace. Not so Charles Count de Valois : being on bad terms with Marigni, he sent forth strange, but as yet

whispered insinuations. These reached the ears of Enguerand, and addressing me he said, ‘De Lor, I really find such pleasure in this work, I cannot give up the pursuit, at all events until the forms I have commenced are finished. Still De Valois is so desperately wicked, and Louis Hutin so weak, that I shall pursue my employment in secret; as usual you can assist me.’ In short, Freida, the images and all connected with them were stealthily conveyed to a cabinet, surrounded at two sides by a narrow passage, and the doors are disguised in the wainscoting and they open with springs, and this retirement is unknown to all save Marigni and me.’

“At the moment I heard approaching steps, and I signed to De Lor to depart. In a short time he returned, a ghastly pallor on his visage; in quivering accents he whispered, ‘Ah! Freida, it is that demon De Valois, no doubt, but he and the Provost are engaged in some wicked league, all to destroy the noble, the good Marigni. Mark thee, my sister, you have sense and fixedness of purpose, but youth is easily persuaded,—tell your son he has true, earnest, and powerful

friends ; but if he trusts in De Valois, we are all inevitably lost,—above all, breathe not a word of the waxen figures.’ The footsteps were no longer heard—so, favoured by the deepening darkness, Jacques de Lor retired.

“ At midnight, Charles De Valois, impatient to learn my success with De Lor, entered my apartment, and addressing me, in a bland voice demanded, ‘ Was Edrid prepared to uphold the evidence relative to the vase, and to swear that he (Edrid) had *not* purloined it ? ’

“ His fury, when I sadly explained Edrid’s firm declaration, that no torture should tempt him to accuse the innocent, or exculpate himself of the act, defies description. Then he swore, ‘ The sacrilegious young robber shall be submitted to the iron bed, to the thumb-screw—to the ordeals of fire and of water,—nay, of hell ! ’ To calm the fiend, lest on the instant he should put his terrible threats into execution,—deranged with the idea, gods of my scattered race ! surely nothing short of madness could tempt me to betray De Lor,—I repeated all I knew of the waxen figures. Oh, that my tongue had

withered to a scroll ere I had acted thus treacherously by my high-minded brother !

“Fury lighted up the Count’s face as he eagerly listened. ‘There needeth little more,’ he exclaimed, ‘to destroy my enemies, still no brand of destruction shall be spared. Think you,’ he remarked, ‘that this Jacques for a large bribe would stand forward and bear witness against these Marignis? It would facilitate and hasten their ruin, and my heart trembleth for the consummation of my just revenge.’

“ ‘Impossible, noble Count, for De Lor both esteems and loves his patron, and my high-minded brother is incapable of deception or of ingratitude.’

“ ‘They are united,’ he bitterly retorted, ‘by unity in wickedness and in preternatural devilries,—but my vengeance shall not be defeated! I will never cease until I trample on the hearts of my enemies, thus—thus—thus!’ He stamped until the floor rebounded; for me, I trembled and shrank before this master spirit of evil.

“ ‘De Lor,’ I remarked timidly, ‘promised to be here to-morrow night. As you,

noble Sir, mean to befriend my son,—can I do more to oblige? Command my services.'

He demanded sternly, 'Why comes that sorcerer here? I have not so commanded!'

" 'To bring some hopes connected with my son,' I replied.

" 'It shall not be—rest satisfied; if but for his musical talents, and your obedience to my will, I, De Valois, promise to uphold this youth; and my power is despotic;'—with these words he retired, but waited some time in the passage, through which wafted in rich melody Edrid's vesper hymn to the Virgin.

CHAPTER X.

“The firmest mind will fail
Beneath misfortune’s stroke, and, stunned, depart
From its sage plan of action.”—SOPHOCLES.

“ON the eve of the dreaded trial, my inspired son supplicated me not to attend him to the court, for I had intimated my intention of so doing. In forcible language he represented that the Bishop of Beauvais objected to the measure. As by no possibility could my presence serve, and might embarrass, his (Edrid’s) friends—become through the influence of Enguerand Marigni a powerful party, and among their number was the Chancellor of France,—‘Of course,’ continued this enthusiast of Truth, ‘no falsehood will be attempted. God and the Saints forbid! I have taken

up the Cross : I may perish by obedience to its divine laws, but never will immolate my soul's salvation to the Father of Lies, the Evil One, the enemy of God ! ’

“ Misery must have made me mad, — yes, for, spurning my angelic son for the virtue which in my soul I venerated, I persisted in the resolve of attending the trial. O Gaultier ! how can I proceed with my mournful detail of coming events ?

“ The morning rose in splendour as if in mockery of our woes : the excitement throughout Paris (as I understood) in respect of Edrid's sacrilege, and the belief that I was a sorcerer and abetted by Jacques de Lor, a magician, was frightful. These reports had been circulated by De Valois' partisans ; and, ere the rising dawn, crowds had congregated to see the wretched culprits ; and to such a height had public indignation risen, that De Valois apprehended we should be spared a trial by the infuriated mob tearing us piecemeal, then all his dark plots would be defeated.

“ This master spirit of evil was never politically or personally at a loss for some

subtle device : he had bought over the Provost to leave us solely to his management. Consequently, when a closed litter arrived to bear Edrid to trial, he filled it with well-armed bravos ; and as the litter proceeded, it was hooted with horrible imprecations and pelted with missiles. At length the fury of the people increased ; they tore open the litter to drag the sacrilegious wretch forth. Then out sprang the armed bravos, —certain that some preternatural means had been adopted, the crowd fled in dismay.

“ Meantime placed in the regally emblazoned carriage of the Count, drawn by six milk-white Andalusian steeds, with my son, I proceeded to the Louvre, whose trial-chamber, exclusively intended for nobles accused of treason, was now to be polluted by the examination of vagrants. This was one of De Valois’ master-strokes of policy ; and, unfortunately for France, Louis Hutin ever yielded up his pious, honest intentions to his uncle’s measures of craft and ambition. The necessity of proceeding by unfrequented ways to the Louvre detained us for a full half-hour after the appointed time. This

irritated the King, who, surrounded by a large company of the episcopacy and clergy, also of princes, barons, knights (among whom were several from Spain and England), had become impatient. He was chafed, too, at observing among them the sneers of scarcely-suppressed indignation and scandal,—the chamber of the nobles being appropriated to the examination of an itinerant pauper.

“Added to this, the partisans of the Valois and of the Marigni were casting on each other looks of hostility; and should they, in despite of his royal presence, burst forth into combat, how could he interfere? The Queen-mother warmly adopted the Marignis, and he (Louis) loved and respected her; but then he feared the Valois—had done so from childhood: all this was distressing.

“To make a pleasantry of admitting the Louvre to be dedicated to the trial of Jongleurs—a class considered as infamous throughout Europe—he commenced coarse jokes, in which he delighted, hoping to cast a shade of ridicule on the whole business; but the grave deportment of the barons proved that they felt the order of our exa-

mination as an insult to the aristocracy. This Louis perceived; indignant with them, ashamed of the part he had been led to act, and impatient at our delay, his anger conquered every sentiment of benevolence; and ere our appearance, his naturally ferocious temper marked us as the victims of his wrath.

“At the instigation of De Valois, whose policy it was to make me look as degraded as possible before the public, I was clad in the garb of extreme poverty; and my countenance, rendered haggard from the loss of blood sustained in my struggle with Hubert Clisson, and the misery I had since suffered, gave me the appearance of one reduced by famine. Never had Charles de Valois—though deemed one of the most amorous men in France—dwelt with more delight over the full form of youth and beauty, than he now gazed on my wretched person. ‘Freida,’ he cried, ‘you have but to disguise the noble contour of your profile, by drawing more forward that moth-eaten hood, and you may well stand sponsor to the most exaggerated detail of famine and distress. Assert

boldly that in your extremity, to allay the pangs of extreme hunger, you accepted the bribes proffered by Clisson to accuse your son of sacrilege—a crime to him impossible; being a Pagan, he never entered a Christian temple, it were a crime punishable by law.’

“I should here mention that this conversation took place in a wide damp gallery in the Louvre, leading to the trial-chamber; its ceiling was arched and supported on heavy columns of unhewn stone. We delayed here until commanded to the royal presence.

“Edrid, who had been listening, grasped my arm, exclaiming (at the same time falling on his knees and clinging to mine), ‘Beloved mother, heed not the wicked prince who would induce you to assert this double falsehood. Nay, hear me—hear me for a moment;’ for, pushing him aside, I strove to interrupt his address, but, still, clasping me he held up a crucifix, exclaiming with energy, ‘This is the symbol of the holy religion into which the Bishop of Beauvais baptized me, and on it I have sworn to tell nothing but the truth, so help me God of the Christians, in the coming hour of tribulation and death.’

“Angrily I tore the crucifix from his hand, and dashed it on the ground. A moment, and the strong arm of De Valois had grappled at my throat and flung me to a distance. ‘Accursed Pagan!’ he roared out; ‘how dare you to insult that blessed image of our holy faith in my presence? Your very touch is pollution to whatever is holy, consecrated, worthy of worship.’

“My spirit was roused; turning scornfully I said, ‘Haughty prince! the greatest of all insults to divinity is to practise falsehood in the working out of a cruel revenge. Even a Pagan venerates the gods.’

“‘Hush! hush, woman! you torture me,’ he said, as grinding his teeth and clenching his hands, he strode up and down. After a time, with a look of desperate defiance and gloom, he said, ‘Freida, this boy must be mastered; for though he possesses not power to defeat my plans, he may delay and embarrass me in the execution. Press him on to obedience, else he dies; for, the sacrilege acknowledged, even I cannot save.’

“I turned to Edrid, who, with folded arms, stood reclining against a pillar: large

tears fell from his beautiful eyes down on the marble pavement, with a low measured noise. From not being tall in stature, and his complexion of a delicate fairness, he looked even younger than he really was ; and it would be impossible to imagine any person more graceful or intellectual, for while his frame had faded under sorrow and overwrought excitement, his mind expanded and discovered in its character the stern decision which had supported his warlike father to submit without a murmur to unspeakable torments, rather than falsify his word, or betray his Order to punishment.

“ But when Edrid, in the enthusiasm of his newly adopted faith, turned his eyes beaming with divine love and hope towards heaven, his whole expression was so celestial, so miraculous in the beauty of holiness, that had I been a Christian mother, bowing in humility, I would have rejoiced that in his purity and truth, while yet untainted by earth’s pollutions, he was going to be translated to the bosom of his God, fit resting-place for his angelic spirit. But no ! I was a Pagan, and could not part with my treasure,

even to its Creator, having no faith in the redemption.

“ Well, well, I stood gazing on this my bright child unnoticed by him, and Charles de Valois was by my side and seemed to comprehend my feelings, for he remarked in an under tone, ‘ Freida, the proudest chief in Christendom might glory in calling that highly-gifted youth his son—he must not perish; persuade him to his good.’ Thus roused, I said, ‘ Edrid, am I not your mother, your only parent? have you not from infancy been the dear object of my care?—have we not, my son, stood alone in the world, our destinies unconnected with others?—think, oh! think then, of my desolation were you gone. Think, how, when I thought the bloom was fading on your young cheeks, how I quitted my pleasant home near Jaffa, with all its rich adornments, its warbling birds, its sparkling fountains, its perfumed flowers, its groves of citrons and its cinnamon gardens; and the pretty stream that watered each, and in which you so often sported;—think, oh! think, Edrid, how, to renovate your health I quitted these delights, to visit

foreign inhospitable climes. And, now, my child,—my little one,—my idol,—my solace,—my all that remains of treasure,—now in my rapid advance to age, now in my broken health, reduced, humbled, an outcast from society, my wild and scattered race, persecuted, hunted, anathematised; say, will you, in favour of a new belief, in your devotion to a priest, who, like all his class, are enemies of our people,—will you, my son, my Edrid, doom me to the heaviest of all afflictions, that of losing you,—a bereavement I could not, would not survive?'

"Struggling with contending feelings, Edrid exclaimed, 'Why, oh! why, my mother, did you, on Wednesday night last, drive me from your presence on rushing to the oratory to find consolation in prayer?—A tall, strange-looking man awaiting me, embraced me with tenderness; he recalled to my recollection that I had known him in Munster, where you had taken me to see the Saxon horde. Then Jacques de Lor—it was he—entered into conversation, representing that neither torture, nor death, not even torture to you, mother—so far dearer to me

than self, should induce me to falsehood, or to the despicable act of sheltering my own guilt by involving the innocent; he (Jacques) concluded by saying, ‘I now bind you by forms, which it is needless to explain. In short, I dare not, as you have become a Christian.’ ‘Wherefore then their use?’ I demanded.

“ ‘Tell Freida you passed through these.’

“ ‘He then obliged me to perform several mysteries, to bind me to the truth. ‘And even though she saw you condemned, she should light the pyre to consume you,—ere she urged you to deviate from an obligation so consummated.’ ”

“I wrung my hands in despair: ‘O cruel Jacques!’ I exclaimed, ‘these mysteries, you well know, cannot be neglected. On you, noble De Valois, now rests my only hope, and, happily, no ties bind me, so I will sacrifice truth, life,—all for Edrid, even though he has proved disobedient to my authority.’

“Edrid fell on his knees, exclaiming, ‘Let us be true, good can never spring from evil. One embrace, one word of forgiveness

ere we part—it may be for ever, O my mother, in this dread hour cast me not from you!’

“His gentleness was softening my soul to him and to truth;—another moment, and I had promised to be guided by his wishes, would have embraced him, and departed, or waited in the gallery,—but the arch-fiend, De Valois, with his keen observation, perceived my hesitation, and on the instant sounded a silver call which hung to his baldrick. In a moment we were surrounded by royal attendants in gorgeous liveries. ‘Announce my arrival,’ he proudly said, ‘and see that these prisoners follow—*both*, remember;’—then, with a countenance calm, as if vice and passion had never ruffled it, his stately form drawn up to its full height, he entered the presence-chamber to confront his enemies. A few moments after, Edrid and I were led—or to speak more correctly, driven in,—our guards considering the very touch of Pagans as pollution.

CHAPTER XI.

“Eagerly she came ;
A deep and fearful lustre in her eye.
A look of settled woe,—pale, deadly pale,
Yet to no lamentations giving way,
Nor tears, nor groans ;—within her breaking heart
She bore the grief.”—SOUTHEY’S *Roderick*.

“On the other side up-rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane :
A fairer person lost not Heaven ; he seem’d
For dignity composed, and high exploit :
But all was false and hollow ; though his tongue
Dropp’d manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels : for his thoughts were low !
To vice industrious,
. yet he pleased the ear,
. . . . with persuasive accent.”—MILTON.

“Not when, urged by woman’s devoted love,
I conquered the natural timidity of my
spirit, and in disguise rode forward to shield

my Templar in Acre,—sad scene of the dying and the dead, my person exposed to destruction from thousands of the enemy, had I experienced such emotions of terror as, when pushed forward, I found myself in the presence of Louis Hutin and his proud company. The King sat on an elevated throne; I just saw that it was hung with rich velvet and gold, and quaintly surrounded by well-preserved heads and skins of fierce animals. Then my brain turned, and I was seized with convulsive fits. Suddenly some person caught my reeling form, and bore me to a door-way that admitted a current of air, pouring some reviving cordial down my throat. This revived me, and I discovered that it was the Père Lagravare on whose arms I rested.

“He whispered, ‘Unhappy Jongleur! your son has powerful friends, adhere strictly to truth, and Edrid will be saved and provided for nobly. Permit not the counsels of De Valois to lure you on to falsehood, or your son is inevitably lost.’ As—on the instant De Valois approached, ‘What means this conference?’ he haughtily demanded,

then sarcastically observed, ‘Think you to bribe this Pagan to accuse her son of sacrilege?’ This was said in a loud voice that all might hear.

“The Père offered no reply,—had not leisure, for in his boisterous manner the King roared out,—

“ ‘How now, Count de Valois? Are you demented, or under the spell or sorcery? of which you affect to be so fearful! though, by the halimas, I do believe that you fear nothing on earth, or in heaven, or in hell; that you thus presume to keep your King and this gallant company waiting on a pair of disbelieving vagrants. Look to it, Charles, there is a point which even our regard for you cannot reach. Sir, to your place!’

“ ‘Honoured liege, excuse me,’ answered De Valois, in a bland tone, and with courtly address, ‘Circumstances, not neglect, caused the delay of those prisoners. Owing to your subjects’ horror of the sacrilege,—a crime of such magnitude as to thrill the souls of the meanest serfs or slaves,—a feeling of hatred against the culprits rose to

such a height, that a multitude collected to drag them from the Provost's litter, when they would have torn them limb from limb. Receiving information of this, I had the prisoners conveyed here in my carriage.'

" 'Say you so?' furiously vociferated Louis, then he laughed, his humour being tickled at the absurdity. 'Sirs, my uncle's carriage, emblazoned with the arms of France, drawn by the Andalusian steeds, has been dedicated to a noble purpose. What say you, nobles?' he waved his hand around. 'After that proof of humiliation henceforward no one can accuse the Valois of pride, it were a foul slander. Perhaps, tomorrow, good uncle, you may honour us so far as to proffer your equipage for our royal recreation. Nobles, but last Monday I accompanied Valois in this very carriage to Fontainbleau. Faugh!' he continued glaring at me in my garb of poverty, with scorn and unaffected disgust.

" 'Nay, Sire,' calmly answered De Valois, 'from the moment that famished wretch'—pointing to me,—'entered it, another and a holier purpose than even

accommodating royalty, was assigned to my carriage; an indignant people shall dash it to pieces, and with the fragments feed the flames lighted to the destruction of the sorcery, heresy, and sacrilege, which are shedding their baleful influence over the kingdom,—nay, within the precincts of the court! Alas, my liege and nephew, dark demons have already commenced, by arts of magic, the slow but certain means of gradually wasting away your Majesty's life; the terrible summons of James de Molai, also an adept in the forbidden science, to the public accounted for the death of your predecessor Philip le Bel; but well I knew how the event came to pass, and the same damned powers are now in play to destroy you, Louis of France.'

"While thus speaking, De Valois fixed his eyes on Enguerand Marigni.

"The boldness of this speech startled Louis; he grew deadly pale, his lip quivered ere he had self-possession to speak. I saw a noble dart forward and confront Valois. I soon discovered that this was the Minister Marigni; his bearing was imposing, and

from the interest he promised to take in Edrid, I anxiously observed him.

“In person he was rather under the middle size ; his chest and shoulders remarkably broad and muscular, and the whole form conveyed the idea of powerful strength ; the contour of his face was nearly square, and too large for proportion ; but its expression was full of vivacity and candour ; at a glance you perceived that he was of a noble nature, incapable of meanness or deception ; and although he was dressed in the fashion of the time, still I observed some peculiarities. A closely fitting tunic of velvet, the edge embroidered with gold and large pearl, this fell below the knees, though in general the nobles’ tunics did not reach within some inches of the knees ; over this fell a loose green mantle, without embroidery, but finished with minever of the most costly description ; beneath it was a magnificent baldrick, in which was stuck a sword of price, its hilt sparkling with innumerable gems. The Minister’s beaver was remarkable, being folded at the back and placed over the left ear in jaunty fashion. As

he now confronted De Valois, his face glowed, and his frame quivered, while in husky accents he called out, 'Count, do you dare again to wrong me in the presence of royalty, by staring and gibing at me while you cast forth your lying aspersions?'

"I looked at the Valois, and marked how different was the bearing of these two nobles, in all, save dark hatred towards each other—so opposite. In Marigni, passion flushed the cheeks, and flashed as fire from his dark straightforward eyes; with the Count, it was as the cold pale gleam issuing from corruption, and glancing its deadly purpose on the high-minded Norman.

"The Count de Valois answered, 'Enguerand Marigni, there shall be no more ambiguity in my address; for here, in the presence of the King of France, and of this gallant company—a more distinguished earth does not contain—I accuse you of practising the arts of sorcery and magic; and for this fell purpose, harbouring within your palace a magician, by name Jacques de Lor; also this man is a Pagan, and he assists in your unchristian, unearthly pursuits, of awful pur-

pose ; and of these heinous crimes I shall produce proofs so irrefragable, that the most incredulous cannot hesitate to pronounce you guilty, and demand your punishment accordingly.'

"The fury of Marigni now rose above all control ; he made an effort to reply, but rage deprived him of utterance ; then he made a spring like a tiger at Valois, who, calm, scornful, sneering, serpent-like, eyed the victim, whom he well knew could not escape his vengeance. Marigni, forgetful of the regal presence, witnessing this coolness, and becoming still more frantic, plucked out a dagger, and made a thrust at the Count de Valois ; the Count, who had anticipated the act, snatched the weapon, and snapped the well-tempered steel in twain ; then gracefully laying the pieces at Louis' feet, exclaimed, ' Thus, beloved nephew, may the power of your enemies be for ever broken !'

"Meantime, the Minister's friends crowded around him, but in vain ; he could not be pacified, so indignant was his upright spirit.

"Then the King, rising with some air of

dignity, said, ‘Marigni, Minister of France, for daring to act this violence in our presence, I place you under arrest, until I have leisure to examine into the strange charges so boldly brought forward by the Count de Valois. Now, by the halimas, if thou art proved guilty, expect no mercy!—on the contrary, if, from revenge, of which I much suspect, our uncle has wronged you, then, by St. Denis, he shall be judged by these chiefs’—waving his hand around—‘that have just now heard his accusation; and they are not of noble thoughts if they permit him to escape with life. I, the King of France, love justice.’

“‘Louis Hutin,’ called out Marigni, ‘so be it. Strong in honesty, I defy that caitiff—yea, to his teeth! Hear! proud, courtly Count! I accuse you of hypocrisy and lies! The spurs should be struck from——’

“‘Away, away with that brawler!’ cried the King, passionately; ‘QUICK,—I say, away with Marigni!’

“‘Excuse me, Louis, for my vehemence,’ pleaded the Minister; ‘my temper was roused

beyond control by the foul aspersions of yonder hypocrite'—pointing to Valois—'but strong in truth and innocence, I set him at defiance.'

"With these words still quivering on his lips the Minister retired. Alas! for Margni, when did truth and innocence triumph over well-concerted hypocrisy?

"Some time elapsed after this scene ere Louis and his chieftains resumed their calmness; its influence was baneful to our cause, as being the primary cause of a quarrel in which every person in court was more or less interested: thus Edrid and I were viewed with increased contempt and scorn.

"The King was the first to speak; he had been greatly chafed, his ill temper to all was visible. In a stern voice he called out, 'Nobles! we met here to examine into an act of damning sacrilege; the object seems forgotten, and our Council-chamber turned into an arena to follow up private feuds. By St. Denis! courtesy must have departed from France when such is the example set by our princely uncle and much-esteemed Minister.'

“De Valois sunk gracefully on one knee at the foot of the throne, and with gentleness exclaimed, ‘Honoured liege, and much-loved nephew, for the present, excuse the part I have unwillingly been forced into in this ignoble disturbance; very soon I expect to win your gratitude by proving that it was devotion to your interest—to your life—which urged me on. Mark me, Louis! your Minister is a wretch, who, in reward of much kindness received from you, in pursuit of some ulterior views, employs devilish arts for your destruction—nay, DEATH!’

“‘Wrong, wrong!’ roared out Louis, whose brusquerie formed such a contrast to the Count’s courtesy, as to win a smile from the courtiers; ‘no more of your mummery about Marigni; let these prisoners be examined. I shall tarry here no longer.’

“Rising, De Valois said, ‘This woman and her son belong to the Saxon Jongleurs, Pagans; and this half-starved woman is sister to Jacques de Lor, the friend and companion of Enguerand Marigni; Jacques, too, is a Pagan—and, mark me—a magician!’

“ Here Louis interrupted him by exclaiming,—

“ ‘ Again attacking the Minister ! I say, sir, stick to the sacrilege, it is that which troubles us—be brief, for we are impatient.’ ”

“ ‘ Well, then, your majesty, this Freida and her son escaped shipwreck, but all they possessed was lost. They reached Paris in extreme want ; the boy Edrid sung through the streets for sustenance, his voice attracted attention—thus they became known. And, to be brief—after the Bishop of Beauvais and Hubert Clisson purloined the vase,—never expecting that the sacrilege would be imputed to them—but there is an all-seeing Providence who would not permit such a crime to go undiscovered and unpunished—to escape detection they visited these wretches in an upper chamber of the tower at Mont-faucon. Being actually starving, these Jongleurs pledged themselves, by Pagan forms, to assert that Edrid, this boy, committed the theft.’ Here De Valois supported his evidence with much eloquence and well-directed artifice ; and concluded by saying,

‘As to the report of Ozias the Jew, it was all a scheme to give an appearance of truth ; however, being imprisoned in the Bishop’s palace—this Beauvais cannot deny—and being placed under the care of the Père Lagravare, well versed in the use of herbs, as might be expected, the Jew died,—no evidence there,’ he sneered,—‘the dead are silent.’

“Louis interrupted, ‘Ho! Sir Count, do you dare to advance the death of a solitary Jew as a crime against our Catholic Bishop, when in the Grand Chastelet you have, with that glossing tongue of yours, that puzzles the understanding and confounds our councils, so oft upheld the righteousness of burning the disbelievers by the hundred? It may be that Beauvais owed the Israelite money and so got quit of the debt—no witchcraft there, good sirs,’ waving his hand around—‘what say you, chiefs?’

“For a moment De Valois was confused ; however he soon rallied, and I was aware that he spoke for long and with vehemence ; but, Longris,” continued Freida, “the capability

of examining into facts had failed me as soon as Edrid's trial commenced. Of the noble assembly I saw but him, as with their angelic expression his long hazel eyes now turned on the stern men who were to doom him to death. Then they were cast up to heaven, imploring mercy ; then rested on me with an expression of heartfelt woe and a deprecating look, as if entreating forgiveness for acting up to his Christian vows.

“ The trial was conducted solely under the surveillance of De Valois. That master spirit was aware that few men—even among those deemed honourable—are competent to judge correctly on any case where their own feelings or passions are engaged ; and prejudice oft proves as influential as feeling. The great point then to be gained was, to prejudice the judges to his side of the question ; thus he enlisted their self-love in his favour, and few—very few, possess magnanimity enough to admit, even to their secret thoughts, that their opinions are erroneous. Acting up to this principle, by a stroke of policy the Count demanded to have me the

first examined, 'Being subject to fits'—he observed—'they may attack her, if she is too long detained. Her son is but a boy, easily led, and seemingly of little intellect—though excellent in music,—but this Freida possesses intelligence, and is impressed with the necessity of truth. Thus on her evidence you may decide.'

" 'I regret,' he proceeded to say, 'that illness precludes our good Provost's attendance; he would have been a check to the irregularities of this business.' Now the Provost's illness was only affected, and a regular examination of facts De Valois dreaded, as they must have led to Marigni's acquittal.

"I was brought forward, and the Bishop of Paris administered the Christian oath; and, Pagan as I am, my soul shuddered as, with the vile purpose of uttering falsehoods to persecute the innocent, I pressed my lips to the golden crucifix of the book. It was some moments ere I could speak; a profound sadness depressed me. Here at the instigation of another I was immolating all that was

lofty and heroic in my nature. I felt abashed — self-abased — a shrinking, paltry, lying wretch : I looked towards my beautiful son, and though it could not conquer self-contempt, it strengthened the resolve to stop at nothing, if I could protect his precious life. As to the King and his Nobles, they awakened no sensation : what cared I for them or their opinions ? they were not of my people ; I only hoped to escape their despotic power by stratagem ; I had no faith in the Christians' justice, experience had taught me to despise them.

“But Jacques de Lor, the enthusiast, who, judging by himself, had exalted his mind to a belief in the power of human virtue to sustain itself amidst the severest trials and sufferings, stood before me. His dark eyes dilating with agony ; his tall gaunt figure bent forward ; his hands clasped ; his whole expression that of indignant sorrow, as he heard me adduce false evidence of his friend Beauvais. Then, as I vehemently proceeded—for I could not, like De Valois, master my feelings into seeming calmness,—

I heard suppressed sobs burst from Edrid; and as my eyes fell on him, I perceived that he had buried his face in his spread hands, and tears dropped down through his fingers. I feared to turn my regards on Jacques, lest his expression of scorn, like that of the fabled basilisk, might strike me dead—so humbled, —miserable, —I obeyed the Count de Valois —sincere in his wish to save Edrid's life, though in all else false—recreant to TRUTH.

“In the midst of this my evidence, Hubert Clisson sternly advanced. Addressing the King, he said, with decision, ‘Though the proceeding seems unusual and against rule, may I humbly entreat, for a few moments, the attention of your Majesty and of the Nobles, as my life depends on the evidence now given; nay, and it may be, the lives of the Marignis?’

“Louis replied, ‘You have it then, best of jewellers, being excellent in your craft;’ so saying, the King handled a small trumpet, chased in gold, of Clisson's workmanship, and which he wore suspended to his tunic.

“Then with much dignity the jeweller

represented the impropriety of admitting a vagabond by profession, and an acknowledged Pagan, to pollute with her lips the symbol of Christianity, and to be admitted as a witness against his Majesty's most honoured subject, the Minister of France, and of Beauvais, the anointed of Christ.

“ Here De Valois attempted to speak, but Louis bellowed out, ‘ No ! Valois, most potent protector of vagrants, think not to bully me, your anointed King, as you did the Marigni, or, by the halimas, you shall feel my power, though heretofore you have boasted of mastering me.’ Bowing haughtily, the Count made no reply.

“ Subsequently, as I have learned, there was much scandal in Paris on the irregularity of the proceedings of this trial. To return to the King : De Valois' proud submission to his authority confused him : to relieve his embarrassment, he called out, ‘ Bishop of Beauvais, is not this young thief a proselyte of yours ? he wears, I see, the blessed cross and rosary. Now, though our polisher of plate seems nervous on the matter of wit-

nesses, he cannot object to the youth.—
Hey! Sir, what say you?’

“Beauvais replied, ‘Your Majesty, that youth has been baptized; he is a Christian; understands the sacredness of an oath.’ Then turning to Edrid he emphatically said,—

“‘Edrid, your faith in Christ’s atonement is going to be proved by a terrible ordeal. That proud man’—pointing to De Valois—‘is your TEMPTER; he offers prolonged life and all that would render existence desirable. Think, then, lately adopted son of grace, of Him, who, to the glory of God, rejected the world and all its treasures: think of Him, who said, the liar and defamer shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven; to you a long eternity of joy depends upon this hour; the Saints uphold your feet from falling!’

“Here the Bishop, overcome with emotion, fell on his knees, uplifting his crucifix, and in a deep sonorous voice sung forth some Latin hymn, not articulate from his agitation. Then every knee, not excepting royalty, was bent; every hand upheld a crucifix save De Lor’s and mine; we bent no knee,

carried no Christian symbol,—a proof of infidelity which did not escape observation.

“As to Edrid, he seemed in an ecstasy ; though unacquainted with the words of the hymn, his ready ear caught the notes, and he breathed it forth with pathos and melody. The spirit of the earliest martyrs inspired him, and he rejoiced in the idea of glorifying God in the midst of tortures and death. Poor youth !

“When all again was calm, De Valois said, ‘Your Majesty, it seems impossible that such an endowed being’—he laid his hands on Edrid’s shoulder—‘could commit sacrilege.’

“‘It is a strange business,’ replied Louis, gravely ; ‘I must hear all parties ere I pass judgment—for I mean, in my own presence, to judge this case ; no common one I wot.’

“The vase was then brought forward, and Edrid at once unhesitatingly repeated the whole truth, just as he had formerly to Clisson and the Père Lagravare. De Valois was confounded at the clearness of his evidence.

“ I was in despair—Edrid was commanded to swear to the facts—kneeling reverentially, his eyes cast towards heaven, he took the oath, his face, lighted up with the beauty of holiness, commanded the admiration of the whole court ; and this was increased, when, after recounting my wants and sufferings, he said,—‘ Blest with the kindest, most amiable of parents, my only regret in parting from life is the deep grief it will cause my mother ;’ he looked towards me and wept. ‘ However, having been guilty of a crime whose punishment is death, I murmur not at the decree ;’ so saying he stood erect, folded his arms, compressed his finely-formed lips. The loose white dress of a neophyte falling like a shroud over his form—oh ! the depths of my agony ! my son awakened general interest—even the King was visibly affected. Alas ! alas !

“ There was a long pause. To break the silence, or, it might be, to increase the interest Edrid had awakened, De Valois, who really loved the youth, and in despite of his vexation, admired the noble spirit that

braved death, and could not by pain be won from its purpose, called for the cithern; as a proof it had been brought to the trial-chamber.

“ ‘With your Majesty’s permission,’ he said to Louis, ‘this youth shall touch the instrument;—he is an admirable minstrel.’

“ ‘As you please,’ the King answered gloomily, and with an air of distrust.

“ Just then De Valois managed to whisper, ‘Freida, be of good cheer, your son is in no danger. I shall protect him; so whatever occurs, have no fear for Edrid’s life.’

“ With difficulty I restrained myself from falling down and kissing the feet of the Count in gratitude for this blessed assurance.

“ On receiving the cithern, Edrid spoke to the Bishop of Beauvais, demanding his permission.

“ ‘Do, my son,’ said the Bishop, ‘please his Majesty, and may the Almighty direct his heart to take compassion on your crime when he knows that you were ignorant of the sin you committed.’

“ Having arranged the instrument, and

proved its tones by a masterly prelude, with his master-touch Edrid played an accompaniment to the ‘*miserere mei Deus*,’ as he sung forth the words; and truly divinity alone could have inspired his voice with such powers. Never since Israel’s king had struck the bold measure, did such a strain of harmony burst on mortal ears; king, prelates, nobles, all seemed entranced, not even a breath was heard, every sense of the company seemed to have resolved into hearing. Then when Edrid came to the ninth verse, ‘Awake up, my glory; awake, lute and harp, I myself will awake right early,’ the youth’s enthusiasm amounted to rapture, and he repeated the verse with a depth of voice, and was seized by emotions so powerful that the cithern glided from his relaxed hands, and he would have fallen; but that Charles de Valois, who, in his love for music, was by his side, caught him in his arms, embraced him, and called out, ‘Louis, you must save this minstrel, if but to sing the songs of heaven.’

“If strangers thus felt, fancy my feel-

ings ; alas ! they conquered judgment. Rushing forward, I fell in Eastern fashion at Louis's feet, humbly kissed the hem of his garment, exclaiming, ' Spare, oh, spare my son ! ' Nothing could have been more ill-timed. Instantly the whole tide of opinion changed, and turned against Edrid and me. The King spurned and shook me off as if I was some noxious reptile ; nay, he trampled on my neck, expressing in coarse language his disgust. This was a war-cry to the cringing courtiers ; some of them, to prove their zeal, even spat at me, others called out, ' Away, away with the wretch—to the dungeons—to the gibbet—to the flames with her ! ' Priests ran forward to exorcise the evil of my touch by sprinkling his Majesty with holy water ; muttering, ' The creature who thus polluted the anointed King must be punished with torture, and her son shall die—his music is sorcery, fascination, he shall surely die ! '

" From those, whom even in my abject state I scorned, I expected no pity ; but after all my suffering and humiliation, I still rose

against insult, and passionately called out, 'Priests of Typhon ! for such in spirit is the foul idol you worship, not the Christ whose attributes are represented as justice, mercy, and love, and whose altars are now polluted by human victims, here take this wretched form of mine and glut your cruelty by mocking, torturing, and consuming it ; but if your hearts are human, if one sentiment of virtue throbs within your bosoms, spare, oh, spare my son, for your Christ's sake spare him !'

"The whole assembly were at once surprised and indignant at my presumption. Louis, springing on his feet, roared out, 'Son of this abandoned woman, you must be a sinner. Does not the blessed book,'—he crossed himself—'proclaim that the thistle cannot bring forth figs : is it not so, Sir Priests ? I am not much learned in the Scriptures ; so what you say, I take to be just.' (They assented.) 'Ah ! even so, away then to the darkest dungeon of the common prison with this infidel Jongleur, until our gownsmen examine her closely. It may be

that she knows secrets connected with sorcery, but the guilt of her son's sacrilege has been proved to the acquittal of our good Bishop of Beauvais. I never believed the idle tale. How now, De Valois, what says the glossing tongue? Art thou still the vagrants' valiant champion and holy defender of Jongleurs? It passes belief.' Again the King's fancy was tickled, he laughed aloud, and the sapient courtiers echoed the laughter.

"Almost scornfully, De Valois replied, 'Be content, my liege; I ask short patience of you and this gallant company: then shall be proved to your satisfaction scenes of the wickedness of those men now much respected, such as in the extent of crime are unprecedented. And as your Majesty has graciously dubbed me protector of vagrants, I claim the right of seeing to the punishment of those criminals.'

"The Bishop of Beauvais, in evident agitation, leant forward and spoke in an under-tone some few words to the King.

"'Be it so,' was his Majesty's reply, who, as usual, roared out; then, turning to

Valois, he sternly said, ‘By the halimas, good uncle, we know thee well, and though not able to sound your plans, we much suspect some evil in your purpose of shielding these Pagans. As I have said it, they shall surely die! Here, Hubert Clisson, our polisher of silver, in the absence of our Provost, we depute thee to see that sacrilegious young wretch to the gibbet,—thanks to our Minister, Marigni, who erected one to punish atrocious crimes. Look to it, Clisson; if that Edrid be not executed ere the sun sets, then, as I live, you shall ascend the gibbet to keep him company in his aerial dance.’ And again the King indulged in laughter.

“At this speech there was a shudder and a look of disapprobation among the courtiers. Louis perceived it, and his evil feelings against us increased to fury.

“‘It grieves me,’ said De Valois, with feeling, ‘that the youth must die. Still I do proclaim him innocent of the sacrilege, and the Bishop of Beauvais guilty.’ Even as he spoke, I saw Hubert Clisson and the Père Lagravare, followed by a party of the

Marigni's men, rush forward ; each of the former caught the wretched boy by the shoulder to hurry him off. I reached out my arms in despair to rescue Edrid. 'O, my mother ! my mother !' I distinctly heard his soft voice utter. Alas ! never again was it to fall on my ear or on my heart. I strove to speak, to kneel ; but nature could support no more, I fell to the ground in convulsive fits. Amidst these struggles, for some time I heard loud voices in contention, then the clash of arms, then all knowledge to me was lost. I became insensible even to despair.

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CHAPTER XII.

“But many a crime deem’d innocent on earth,
Registered in heav’n; and there no doubt
Have each their *record* with a curse annexed.”

COWPER’S *Task*.

“Uttering not a word,
I looked upon the visage of my son,
I wept not: so all stone I felt within.”

. DANTE.

“My first returning consciousness was a sensation of passing rapidly through the air, and a pleasing idea that with Edrid I was flying towards the Christians’ heaven, for whose attainment he had forfeited his young life. Soon, however, the bright illusion vanished in the reality of finding myself seated on a large horse, before an armed soldier, whose arm encircled my waist with an iron grasp.

“Where am I?—where is Edrid, my son? Oh! soldier! relieve my misery, say, where is he! my son, my son?”

“‘Silence! you damned sorceress!’ he retorted, striking my shoulder; ‘to what a pretty service the Count has appointed me; here am I riding through the country with a witch, while my comrades measure weapons with the Marigni’s men—shame, De Valois!’

“‘But Edrid, my son!—where is he?’ I groaned aloud. ‘Oh! in mercy say where is my son?’

“In a tone of exultation, the soldier replied, ‘The sacrilegious thief is where he ought to be, swinging on Marigni’s gibbet. You tremble; ah! sorceress! have you no spell to save him when I bring you within view to your old haunt Montfaucon?’

“‘Oh! take me to the gibbet—to my son!’—cries of despair burst from my tortured bosom—‘as you are human, have mercy on a mother’s woe! Kind soldier, I cry for mercy. Your Christ is full of mercy!’

“‘Mercy on a sorceress! and so condemn my own soul? Silence, you witch!’—he

struck me—then kicking the steed, it rushed forward—a few moments brought us to the tower of Montfaucon; springing from the horse, the soldier caught me in his arms, rushed up the stairs, and flung me into the chamber Edrid and I had occupied.”

Here Freida stopped in her narrative, covered her face, and wept aloud. Ten minutes elapsed ere she could summon self-command to proceed, then in quivering accents she said—

“ Well, Longris, the soldier had locked me in. I heard his retreating steps, and rushed to the fatal window, but some time elapsed ere I could force it open. As before described, it was long and narrow, protected by crossed iron bars, you might thrust your hand through; but that was all. The view, however, was extensive, and the gibbet, in full relief, rose before me, and near to it glowed a fire, and some stragglers were strolling around. There was a clash of arms heard, and approaching through the barrier were seen a numerous band of retainers, wearing the Marigni’s badge, and gaily in

the sun flashed their bright arms ; and between their lines moved an humble litter, closely covered, and, at either side of this, rode a Christian priest, and in front came Hubert Clisson and the Père Lagravare. The litter stopped at the foot of the gibbet—the armed soldiers filed off some paces—and on the instant, but from a great distance, might be distinguished the war-cry of De Valois, ‘I conquer all.’ This hastened the catastrophe, Hubert Clisson burst open the litter—a priest supporting the fainting form of Edrid sprang out. Powers of darkness ! how did I witness this and live : they hurried my son up the terrible elevation. Such was their haste that the common executioner had not arrived. I heard voices from the mob cry out, ‘Look, look, the executioner is coming in this direction from the Provost’s !’ Demons of cruelty ! not a moment would they pause. Hubert Clisson, insatiable in his revenge, acted the abhorrent part of executioner, and in a few minutes Edrid was no more. Demons ! this did not satisfy them ; the corpse was hurried down and laid on the pyre.

Hubert, the Père, and the three ecclesiastics standing around, and Edrid exquisitely beautiful even in death—his face chanced to be turned towards me—was soon surrounded by the devouring flames: these five cruel men stirring up the blaze to more rapidly consume. This horrible scene did not last many moments; had it been delayed some fifteen minutes, the human victim had been saved, for by that time De Valois and his noble band dashed into the arena of those horrible rites for the express purpose of saving my son's life. Shrieking with unspeakable anguish I had covered my face to shut out the horrible view; then, as if fascinated, gazed again and saw Clisson and the Père heap fresh faggots, and higher the flames ascended, and with long swords they stirred up the embers, then mounting their horses galloped away, followed by the Margni's men, in the direction opposite to that by which De Valois and his company arrived. On seeing the place empty and the fire smouldering away, the Count turned off. Why should he loiter? Of my beautiful

gifted son nought remained but a heap of ashes !” In wild, rapid words the Jongleur had described this event.

“Freida,” exclaimed Gaultier, “I pity you, and can well imagine your despair for that fair child, so dear and so gifted.”

“No, no, Gaultier,” she sobbed out, “the heart of man cannot comprehend the depths of a mother’s love, and I had but him ; and, unhappily, among my fugitive people parental feelings are powerful. Oh ! Edrid, Edrid,” she exclaimed, rising and clasping her hands, “months, years have rolled on since your horrible death ; yet not a night has since elapsed but memory brought you back to your bereaved mother ; whether in infancy resting on my bosom, my pride, my joy, my hope, and your gallant father tenderly hanging over ; or as in playful childhood you sported before me, a light to my path ; and dearer still when, in your advance to manhood, untainted by sin, your exalted mind shed the halo of enthusiastic affection around our home. Oh !”

“Come, come,” interrupted Gaultier,

“if you cannot command these expressions of woe, I must retire,”—he stood up.

“Nay, in mercy,” she cried, “if but in memory of the field of Acre, bear with me; to-night I would conclude all connected with this sacrifice of my child, the retrospection is so heart-rending.

“I had fallen fainting to the ground. I knew not how long I continued insensible, but the first dread night of my son’s death had passed away, for the sun shone in through the casement. Some one must have entered, as the table was covered with refreshments. I cared not for them. Again I gazed out at Montfaucon. Oh! let me not recapitulate the misery of that hour,—my limbs shuddered, my heart bled, and my brain glowed as if consumed by fire. To cool the throbbing agony I seated myself in the balcony, where at the moonlight hour Edrid delighted in singing forth his poetic rhapsodies. Now I must have been perfectly sane and sensible to passing objects; for as the sun rose in the heavens I distinguished the chimes of innumerable bells

summoning the Christians to prayer ; and as morning advanced came the clashing of arms, and clattering of hoofs, as nobles and knights dashed through the barrier, and in their wake were squires, and serving-men with falcons and hounds, all on the wing for pleasure ; and more sweet, more dear, was the merry laugh of children sporting beneath the balcony—all around was life—but Edrid was dead ! * * *

“ The shades of night involved my chamber in darkness when the soldier entered with another basket of provisions ; observing that the former remained untouched, he exclaimed,—

“ ‘ Ha ! thou damned sorceress, you can live, it seems, without food. How like you that pleasant view ? ’ pointing to the gibbet, for I had left the casement unclosed ; ‘ they say in Paris that Marigni will soon ascend it. I love to see these chiefs fall out, we serving-men then pick up power. Now, witch,’ kicking at me with his iron heel, ‘ prophesy the ruin of the Marignis and De Valois, and as guerdon you shall be free.

Down with all nobles ! cry I. So, witch, you neither speak nor eat ; be it so, I shall take the last trouble off your hands.' So saying, he sat down and devoured the delicacies with which, by the orders of De Valois, I had been liberally supplied. At length glutting his appetite, he placed a lighted lamp on the table, and departed.

“ This soldier was the most ferocious savage I have ever met, but recommended to the Count by animal courage, which rendered him fearless of God and man. Thousands of such, raised from the slaves which had been emancipated by the policy of Philip le Bel, were in the service of Charles de Valois, and even their demoniacal spirits crouched and quailed before the superior genius of the despotic Count.

“ Another night and day passed off in the same manner. Each evening the brutal soldier entered with a basket of provisions ; rude and insulting, full of cruelty, he was wont to kick or strike me. I had sunk into a state of apathy on the third morning, from excess of weakness ; I believed myself

dying ; it rejoiced me, then. I ate some bread, and drank several cups of water, after which I fell into a profound sleep ; from this I was roused by hearing the door opened. Concluding it was the soldier, I roused myself, and sat upon the couch : a soft step approached, a light flashed through the room, and with surprise I beheld my brother, Jacques de Lor.

“ He was sadly altered within the few days since the trial ! His long hair, generally waving in glossy luxuriance down his shoulders, was matted and dishevelled, his face pallid, his dark eyes dilated to an unearthly size and clearness ; loosely the flowing robe fell over his shrunken shoulders, and the emaciated hand which had re-lighted my lamp trembled with weakness. He addressed me, saying,—

“ ‘ Freida ! have I not always loved you ? and though you have, I much fear, brought ruin on my noble patron, Enguerand Margni, by betraying to that prince of evil, Charles de Valois, where the waxen images of the Minister’s moulding were deposited,

still, Freida, I cannot reflect upon your affliction about the youth Edrid without, at every risk, trying to console you ; and for this purpose, since the morning of his condemnation, have each night hovered around this tower ; for, alas ! my sister, our wicked persecutor, the Count, has offered large guerdon for my apprehension ; and, O Freida, worse — far worse — my beautiful Hindoo, the wife of my bosom, the gem of my soul, is in the power of De Valois ! He has imprisoned her !’

“ Here, from agony, he let the lamp fall, and burst forth into a passion of tears. The moon at its full shed through the open casement its refulgent glory ; still objects were only visible through the dim obscure.

“ It was cruel — heartless ! Oh, how I now repent it ! but in my inordinate grief for Edrid, I had not a sigh to spare even for De Lor’s sorrow, and I coldly replied,—

“ ‘ Jacques, when Edrid was sacrificed to satiate a cruel power, you should have known that for me there was no consolation,—no further grief ; — farewell, then,

my brother! depart in peace! The risk you have run was weakness! Away, ere the soldier returns;—he is a savage! Save yourself, De Lor.’

“‘How, Freida, can I think of self, seeing you thus miserable? and, oh! so sadly changed! It seems as if a spectral form lay before me; and I dread that even the words of sympathy and hope I come to communicate may by excitement snap asunder the slight thread which unites you to life; so for the present shall depart; to-morrow the Amazonian will be in Paris, and at this hour expect us both; and try, dear sister, to support your remaining strength.’

“‘What! our mother!’ I exclaimed; ‘how comes it that she is in Paris?’

“‘It were tedious now to relate the chain of events connected with her coming, then I dread your guard’s arrival here. Drink this! it will strengthen and support you.’ He drew a flask from his pocket, and poured out a cup-full of prepared Hungarian wine. I swallowed it eagerly, for

my throat was parched; then he drank some, and, tenderly embracing, bade me adieu.

“Just as Jacques opened the door to depart, we heard the ring of spurs, as some one ascended the stairs; and then burst forth, in tones of anger, De Valois’ commanding voice.

“De Lor grasped my hand.

“‘Freida,’ he whispered; ‘secrete me! shield me from that desperate man! Listen ——’

“Ere the sentence was concluded, Charles, Count de Valois, followed by two gendarmes, stood before us.

“‘Hah!’ he haughtily exclaimed; ‘this is well! Here, guards, seize this magician, and cast him into the deepest dungeon of the common prison; and if, by next Wednesday, he refuses to expose the wicked acts of sorcery performed by Enguerand Marigni, administer the torture.’

“It was then Monday night; on the previous Friday the *sacrifice* of Edrid had been perpetrated.

“Casting himself at the feet of the Count, De Lor, in piercing accents, exclaimed,—

“‘De Valois, not for myself, but for the unfortunate Hindoo Shadi, do I supplicate : have mercy on her. She will not listen to your love ; still, by all you worship, spare her life ! Even malice can adduce no crime against her.’

“‘Fool !’ scornfully interrupted the Count ; ‘this Shadi is an idolater ; this at once criminales and condemns her to die by fire !’

“‘No !’ vehemently retorted De Lor, unable to command his anger ; ‘that cannot be in Christendom, where idolatry is practised, under the insulted name of Christianity ; yea, even to the offering up of human victims. It were against truth and justice ; and I will not submit !’

“‘Not submit !’ sneered De Valois. ‘You shall submit !. nay, more,—you shall learn that POWER rules the land. But it lessens our dignity to barter words with the abettor of sorcery ! Enough, the

power to punish lies with me, and I shall not spare my enemies.'

"De Lor rose from his kneeling attitude, and folding his arms across his bosom, sternly replied,—

"'Proud Prince, well do you know that your accusation is false. Were I acquainted with the arts of magic, I should not stand here to be insulted. That such mysterious knowledge did exist, the learned know. That it still exists, has long been my firm belief; but, alas! after years of study and research, it has eluded my narrow capacity for the occult science.'

"The Count, in his bland manner, now said,—

"'De Lor, I have never deceived you or Freida. As to the insult offered to me by Enguerand Marigni, in first accusing me of embezzling the public money, then in full court striking at me, enough, he must die! No less requital can satisfy my wounded pride. Assist me by giving evidence as I shall dictate, then Shadi shall be restored to your arms, and full means

granted to assist your leaving France with your beautiful Hindoo.'

"Jacques groaned aloud. Some moments elapsed ere he spoke, then, in reproachful accents, he said,—

" 'This refinement on cruelty is sinful, and which none, Count de Valois, but you could practise. Why aggravate the torture of my present feelings by placing Shadi's destiny in my keeping? After this, I set at nought physical torture. Now learn, proud Count, that gratitude among the fugitive tribes is the sentiment most respected; and the spirit capable of betraying friendship, or of requiting good offices by evil, being deemed unworthy of animating the human form, when removed from its tabernacle, is doomed, as punishment, to crawl the earth in serpent fashion, or, it may be, translated into the form of uncleanly swine. It is the ennobling principle of gratitude, which for ages has bound our people together, by a mysterious freemasonry, and has given some dignity to, in all else, our degraded position. Besides, independent of our belief

in the transmigration of souls, we are bound to the virtue by solemn obligations. And, noble Count, recall to mind, when on a mere suspicion, Philip le Bel was going to have me consumed as a sorcerer, it was the Marigni who interceded for my life, and discovering that I had seen many distant lands, in his thirst for information, overlooking the gulf society placed between us, he honoured me with his companionship. It ripened into friendship as we pursued our studies together,—the starry heavens, the fruitful earth, man's strangely mysterious nature, the books we perused.'

" 'Come, come, no more of this,' haughtily interrupted De Valois; 'I well know that the proud Norman humbles himself for devilish purposes, to what by right is only a fit pursuit for clerks or gownsmen; but, however, sorcerer, your forked tongue cannot deceive me. Now, attend. The Minister of France's intimacy with you results from the mutual pursuit after forbidden knowledge. Mark me, your secret is discovered; even now, guards

surround the closet which contains these magical naked images.'

"De Lor groaned and looked scornfully at me for having extorted his secret and then betrayed him.

"The keenly observant De Valois perceiving this, exclaimed,—

" 'Attend to me, Freida! By this I swear' (he kissed the crucifix) that Jacques de Lor assisted towards dragging your son into the litter, which hurried him to Montfaucon; and by the same sacred oath, so did I love Edrid, that I would have cut off my finger' (he held it up) 'to save his life, and then adopted him as the minstrel of my house—nay, of my heart!'

"As De Valois spoke, with a cry I bounded towards De Lor,—

" 'Wretched man, can this be true?' I demanded. 'But no—no, it could not be you, my brother.'

"He hesitated, then said,—

" 'Yes, Freida; but listen to my explanation. Grant five minutes to private

conference, then will you applaud, not condemn your wretched brother.'

" 'Applaud the brother who assisted, to please a patron, towards my innocent son's horrible doom! Ah! De Valois,' I continued, 'these scorching eyes beheld Hubert Clisson act as executioner, lest your arrival might interfere to prevent the deed of cruelty. Oh! why, noble Count, did you tarry in your work of grace?'

" 'Ah! Freida, your despair distracts me. Grant attention to what I would gladly impart,' exclaimed De Lor, embracing me with tenderness.

" 'Demon, off! off!' for he held me in his arms. 'Oh! to unite with fiends for Edrid's destruction.' I fell powerless, though not insensible, to the ground.

" De Lor knelt by my side, and in soothing accents, but in the horde's language, said,—

" 'My afflicted sister, this may be my last opportunity of confiding a secret to your knowledge, but except you pledge to keep

it, I dare not betray, even when I thus witness the despair I would die to alleviate. Ah! had you been true to yourself!’

“‘Silence!’ roared out De Valois. ‘How dare you chatter that vile jargon in our princely presence! Here, guards!—enter!’ In a moment they were at his side. ‘See! seize this man, and place him in the dungeons of the Temple! It is there he shall be imprisoned!’

“Thus speaking he stamped with passion, until the old tower seemed to shake from the violence. Again Jacques called out,—

“‘Freida! let me explain!’

“‘Off! off! interrupted De Valois. ‘Why loiter? Soldiers, do you dare to hesitate? Off, on the instant! De Valois commands.’

“As they obeyed, the Count followed them some steps, and then called out,—

“‘De Lor, I grant you until Wednesday next to repent! Yield to my wishes; give evidence against the Marigni, and, by the

host of heaven, I will keep my word ; and Shadi, the beautiful, shall be saved.'

" 'Never !—never will I wrong the Marigni !' was De Lor's answer. He then called out, 'Freida !' With tottering steps I strove to follow. He uttered loudly some words in the tribe's jargon, but they were indistinct, for the Count still persisted in roaring out, 'Repent ! for Shadi's sake, repent !'

" They had now reached the bottom of the stairs. A few moments after, and I heard the loud clattering of horses as the guards bore off De Lor to the dungeons of the Temple.

CHAPTER XIII.

“I feel for thee, Armida! If my powers
Were such, how gladly would I cure thy pain!

* * * *

I have no hatred, no disdain; . . . peace I fain
Would give thee.”—WIFFIN’S *Tasso*.

“THE capacity of the human heart for suffering is wonderful. When Edrid perished, I did suppose that no grief could again affect, and to pleasure my soul was for ever dead; but now the knowledge of Jacques de Lor’s treachery deeply affected me. I cannot follow up the feeling. I had so admired his enthusiasm; had such faith in his truth and fixedness of purpose,—how had I been deceived! The plague-spot of sin corrupted all human beings, and the only relief I could find was in the arms of death. But

the Christian's resurrection pressed on my soul. I was no Christian. Then why should their beliefs trouble? I would shake it off! Alas! I could not. It weighed like an incubus on my thoughts. Why, ah! why had I read their Bible? Why did its sacred inspirations awaken such emotions as at times to persuade me to repent all human affections, and take up the Cross of redemption? But then I remembered the Christians' acts of crime and idolatry, and so I rejected their creed as a theory, not a practice."

"Enough of this, thou Pagan!" angrily interrupted Gaultier. "I came here to learn how you can serve me, and what guerdon you demand, not to discuss religion with an infidel. What know you of Christ?"

"After De Lor's departure I felt revived, either from the cordial he had given me or the reaction of my ideas. De Valois, in great agitation, was pacing the apartment, occasionally pausing at one of the casements to look out on the moonlight scene; for this extraordinary man was keenly sensible of

the beauties of Nature. Once or twice he sighed convulsively. This attracted my attention.

“It appeared the Prince had proceeded to my wretched residence near Montfaucon direct from the Palace of the Louvre, where, in the presence of Louis and his court, he had boldly brought forth his extraordinary charge of sorcery against Marigni; and the King, who had refuted the accusation against his minister with much spirit, swore by his favourite oaths, St. Denis and the hali-mass, that if on the following Wednesday De Valois did not bring forth sufficient proof and witnesses to prove the truth of his horrible assertions, that he should be banished from France, and that Louis would himself in person proceed to Avignon and get the Pope to excommunicate him, and to confiscate his vast possessions, ‘Extracted from the crown of France,’ exclaimed Louis, with bitterness, ‘it is right that they should now return to nourish the parent stock.’ This conduct on the part of the young monarch if possible in-

censed the hatred of Valois against Enguerand de Marigni, and rendered his thirst of vengeance more dire; but, as usual, he smothered his dark passions, and retired from the royal presence with his courtier-like address. Assisted by power and wealth, false witnesses he knew could be suborned; with a few bright exceptions, he was aware the cupidity of the heads of the Church left them open to seduction; still much was at stake. The noble character of the Minister, his honest, uncompromising truth, the absurdity of the charges—for while Valois considered nothing as too contemptible which assisted towards the one great object, his revenge, he scorned with bitter derision the folly which lent a willing ear to the absurd allegation that the Minister of France could destroy human life by the formation and melting away of waxen images; but Marigni's intimacy with such a person as Jacques de Lor, he, in point of fact, considered both as a mystery and a crime; and could Jacques be gained as a witness, no difficulty would arise to the destruction

of Marigni. Consequently it was with a glow of pleasure that he learned from one of his spies—for such he ever had scattered, not only through Paris, but throughout the empire—that Jacques de Lor was seen every night hovering near Montfaucon. At once Valois comprehended that his object must be to gain access to me ; to facilitate which, he directed the guards to leave him full opportunity, but to remain in ambush, and should Jacques enter my apartment to give him instant notice. Alas ! for my miserable brother, he fell into the snare. With the result of the meeting, you are already acquainted. Let me now return to myself.

“ My faculties restored by the cordial, I was able to notice the Valois ; and even in my distress of mind, I was dazzled by his splendid and noble appearance as he walked up and down my sordid chamber, his princely robes flowing gracefully over his tall person, the beauty of his features increased by the glow of passion and pride which still lighted them up ; it seemed as if the earth he trod was unworthy to bear him, and I experienced

a consciousness of meanness and degradation in his presence. Once or twice he stopped and drank off a large goblet of wine; for, as I have before remarked, my table, by his order, was profusely and luxuriously supplied, and he evidently suffered under some violent emotion, which he struggled to conquer. At length he advanced to where I was, and stood before me. I attempted to rise, but in that bland manner which at once touched the heart he said,—

“‘Freida de Lor Girion, remain as you are, you require rest. I pity you, and join in your grief for the gentle boy, who by a strange destiny has fallen a victim to the feelings and passions of men whom he never offended—never could offend. Freida, the interest that youth—that Edrid—created in me, was almost supernatural. His voice awakened chords of sympathy in my bosom never before touched. My soul, ever alive to the powers of melody, was captivated, entranced. Methinks the spirit of divine harmony breathed by him could almost have won me from my revenge; nor amidst the fiery

passions that govern my soul am I insensible to the beauty of holiness, and I almost revered the enthusiasm of the young Christian proselyte who preferred death to falsehood. Much it marvels me that one so lowly born should possess such dignity, such steadiness of purpose.'

"I essayed to answer,—to boast that Edrid was descended from the noblest knight that ever wielded a lance in Christendom; but then the awful destinies of father and of son recurred to my memory. Life was but a bubble, pride the glittering gleam of corruption. All, all was vanity. Bending my head between my knees, I wept long and bitterly. Then I said,—

" ' Charles de Valois, I thank you for the love you express for my departed Edrid; let the compassion his fate awakens plead the cause of Jacques de Lor, who is but a wild fantastic visionary, sacrificing from youth his time, his health, his money, to a pursuit after shadows; but he is of a noble nature. Spare him!'

" He answered sternly,—

“ ‘ Woman ! dare not intercede for him. I have offered him forgiveness on one condition—let him criminate Enguerand de Marigni, and he shall experience the extent of princely favour—else he dies, were it only for his cruelty to your condemned son.’

“ I looked inquiringly in his face ; for I was unable to speak. Guessing my thoughts, for nothing escaped his keen observation, Valois said,—

“ ‘ You shall hear the particulars, but do not interrupt me, as I have already delayed here too long. A banquet given at my palace for the Hungarian Princes, lately arrived at the Court of France, will await my presence.’

“ I muttered some words of entreaty, that he would honour me by the detail of Edrid’s seizure ; for as grief varies in its form, so mine clung with a painful tenacity to every circumstance which could bring him back to my memory.

“ ‘ Freida,’ said the Prince, ‘ I conclude you remember what occurred in the trial-

chamber of the Louvre previous to your being attacked with fits?’

“I answered in the affirmative, and he proceeded,—

“‘It is not then necessary for me to recapitulate the trial of Edrid, if, indeed, so irregular a proceeding may be graced with so grave a name. Here, I must say, that nothing could have been more ill-judged than your interference with Louis, and casting yourself at his feet; that action roused his anger. Disgusted, loathing you, he hastily, intemperately, doomed your son to death, and was proceeding to pass the same sentence on yourself, when I interrupted him by a bold assertion of Edrid’s innocence of the sacrilege, and of the Marigni’s guilt. Scarcely had I ended speaking, when a violent tumult arose—the Chancellor and a large party of Marigni’s friends, forgetting the respect due to majesty, broke out into a violent attack upon me, and a defence of the Minister. Provoked at such an exhibition in his presence, the displeasure of the King

rose to fury. He commanded that Enguerand de Marigni and the Chancellor of France should instantly be placed under strict confinement until acquitted of my charges, when, again, in the event of their innocence, all his threats to me were to be put into execution. Nothing could have suited my plans more than this measure—the imprisonment of Marigni was the first step to his destruction. I wished to include the Bishop of Beauvais in the order; but I knew Louis too well to interfere with his excited passions, so I now merely attended him as he hastily returned from the scene of unkingly contention, and strove, by the profound respect of my manner, to prove how much I condemned the indiscretion of the Marigni's partisans. Louis was evidently soothed by my flattery. I followed him to the Tour de la Libraire, where he retired in his anger, and joined in his indignation at the past scene; in short, so won on his ardent, generous, but weak temperament, that in less than two hours his good opinion of Beauvais was staggered,

and he issued an order for his detention, and also that the execution of Edrid should be postponed until his guilt was more fully investigated; but his horror of you was not to be qualified, and he swore by St. Denis, you should perish in Edrid's place.'

"When the Valois had spoken so far, I groaned aloud with agony, exclaiming,—

" 'Oh! that I had, noble Prince; that, indeed, had been mercy.'

" 'Nay, interrupt me not,' said he, haughtily, 'but rather thank me that when I saw you fall down in a fit, I ordered a man-at-arms to remove you to your former residence near the barrier. But it will be necessary to explain what occurred in the trial-chamber after I had retired with the King, and the particulars of which were reported to me by a friend. For some time all was a scene of vulgar confusion between the opposite parties. The unfortunate Edrid pathetically entreated for permission to follow you, to obtain your forgiveness, and bid you a final adieu, ere his execution; but his gentle supplications were sternly refused by the

jeweller Clisson and the Père Lagravare. This severity awakened a sentiment of pity towards the condemned youth, observing which the Bishop of Beauvais stepped forward, and addressing the company, hastily, but with energy, explained how he had gained Edrid over to Christianity, and how enthusiastic he had found him, and, in the name of Christ, desired that he should be permitted to retire with the neophyte for the space of half-an-hour to confess and shrive him, as commanded by holy Church, and which sacred office could not be performed in the presence of the guards with the same sacredness. To such a request not even the vindictive jeweller could object; and Freida, were you a Christian parent, the knowledge of these holy offices being performed would bring its consolation. But so vehement was the anxiety of Clisson and Lagravare to hurry the execution of your son, that they became impatient of the lengthened prayers, and went to hurry the Bishop of Beauvais. I know not how long they might have been detained, for by this time every person had

retired from the trial-chamber, and the whole neighbourhood became a scene of shameful riot. ‘The Valois!’ ‘The Marigni!’ was the war-cry; gauntlets were dashed to the ground, swords drawn, the streets flowed with blood. Taking advantage of the confusion, Hubert Clisson hurried the litter that was to bear Edrid to execution. I had my men about the palace; but, most unfortunately, I had not prepared against such sudden measures; thus, though the cravens knew I was resolved, under every emergency, to save Edrid, not having positive orders how to act, they stood by and saw him carried through one of the private portals of the Louvre to the litter. Jacques de Lor and Hubert Clisson actually pulled him forward, the Père Lagravare helped him in and then followed.’

“I groaned convulsively, shrieking out, ‘Prince, your partisans saw all this, and made no effort to save him!’

“‘None,’ answered Valois, fiercely. ‘I tell thee, Freida, there is not one man in the thousand,—nay, in tens of thousands,

who acts from his own impulses. No, the crowd follow on the beaten track ; thus it becomes easier to be a leader than people imagine. Decision and energy alone are requisite.'

"I interrupted him, demanding, why slept the friendship of the Bishop of Beauvais, when Edrid was in danger ; he who expressed so much anxiety for his future happiness, which, to the most believing, is still a mystery, might surely have made an effort to save the poor youth's life ?

"Valois answered, he was too much engaged in trying to make his own escape, warned by some of his friends that Louis had ordered him to be imprisoned. He found his way from the Louvre, with every avenue of which, it seems, he was well acquainted ; accompanied by several ecclesiastics, he hastened to the northern entrance, near to which was my carriage in waiting, the same that had brought you and Edrid from the Provost's. There the Bishop was soon surrounded by some of Marigni's serving-men, who, taking advantage of the scuffle every-

where raging, forcibly dragged my men from the equipage, into which sprung Beauvais and a couple of priests ; some of Marigni's men then mounted the horses and dashed through Paris unmolested, all making way for them. My friends naturally supposed I was hurrying from some danger, and Beauvais contrived to acquaint his own party with the fact of his *ruse*. Can you wonder that I hate these Marignis ?'

“ ‘Then the Bishop has escaped,’ I exclaimed ; ‘and it gives me pleasure, for he was a friend to Edrid, though he, too, abhorred me.’

“ ‘For the present,’ answered Valois, sullenly, ‘he has escaped ; but subtle as the prelate is, he shall not long elude my vengeance. This morning my six white steeds, a present sent to me three years hence by Isabella of England, were found in my outer court. None can tell how they were conveyed there ; except, indeed, there are traitors in my household. This afternoon, as I left the palace, I learned that one of the noble animals had expired from

fatigue, and another was at the point of death. But I have digressed from my own efforts to save your ill-fated son. Instantly on receiving the King's permission to have the execution postponed, I hurried to the trial-chamber to secure his person, purposing to remove him to my palace; once there under my protection, all the crowned heads in Europe should not molest him. On reaching the apartment I found it deserted, except by a few loiterers; from them I learned that Edrid had been hurried off to Montfaucon. Without a moment's hesitation I rushed to the spot where I had left my carriage, calculating that my noble steeds, the fleetest in Paris,—ay, or in France, would soon overtake the heavy litter. Judge, then, of my disappointment, my fury at hearing of the effrontery of Beauvais; yet even then I did not lose my presence of mind or desert your cause. From the royal mews I mounted as many of my friends as chanced to be present. Placing myself at their head, and putting the horses to the top of their speed, we dashed forward over

every impediment. It is needless to go on. We were too late for our purpose ; but the bright flame which ascended from Edrid's funeral pyre shall be quenched in the blood of the Marignis. Neither age nor sex of that hated family shall be saved ! I, Charles de Valois, have sworn it on this !' and he elevated his crucifix ; 'and what I have sworn shall come to pass !'

"Till now my hopeless grief had suggested no means of consolation ; but as I marked the glowing countenance of Valois, saw him grind his teeth, and clench his hands in the anticipation of his revenge, by some unaccountable sympathy the same dark passion took possession of my soul, and, quick as the summer's lightning, I resolved to seek revenge against Hubert Clisson and the Père Lagravare for their unrelenting persecutions of my guiltless son. Though the desire of avenging my child's untimely death had before occurred, it was a languid feeling in comparison ; but from that instant it became a fixed principle of my mind,—the chief, I may

say,—the sole object of my being. Waiting till Valois was more composed, I ventured to say,—

“ ‘Noble Prince, in the execution of your just revenge on the Marignis for all the insults they have dared to offer, let me entreat of you to include the wretches, Hubert Clisson and the Père Lagravare.’

“The proud Prince turned on me, fixing his large blue eyes with a look of such withering scorn, that I shrunk and trembled before their glance.

“ ‘Freida de Lor !’ he cried, ‘has misery demented thee to suppose that Charles de Valois would even in an act of vengeance unite the Minister of France and Bishop of Beauvais with such low-bred, vulgar mechanics? I leave the punishment of such to my varlets.’ He paused, then added, ‘Yet I will not condemn, but pity you. Here, take this !’ And he threw a purse of gold at my feet. ‘Nay more, if I can, without injuring or delaying my own cause, implicate these low partisans of the Marignis, they shall perish ! And now,

wretched woman, let me warn you not to quit this apartment until after Wednesday ; the King has condemned you ; an infuriated mob seek your life ; as an infidel you cannot seek sanctuary within the pale of the Church. Having served me in the discovery of the waxen images, and upheld my testimony relative to the sacrilege, I owe you thanks ; and if Charles de Valois never forgives an insult, he never wantonly deserts those who truly serve him.'

"With these words he was retiring from my sordid chamber with his lordly step ; but the impetus of my newly-awakened passion, Revenge, gave me courage to again address that proud man.

" ' Noble Prince,' I called out, as I meekly stepped before him, ' I would still presume to detain you by a few words.'

" ' You presume too far on our condescension,' he answered sternly ; ' but thus it ever is with our inferiors,—treat them with lenity, and they instantly attempt to pass over the bounds which separate them from their superiors.'

“ While he was saying these words, he had advanced towards the door, already his hand was on the lock, when, in a tone of decision, I said,—

“ ‘ For no idle words do I now detain you, noble Prince, but for the kindness you would have done my lost Edrid, I would reward you, and in so doing shall expose the cupidity of Hubert Clisson and of the Père Lagravare, and prove, if indeed it requires proof, that motives, far different than religious horror at the sacrilege, or offended dignity at the suspicion of its perpetration, influenced these men to hurry, against all human pity, the execution of the helpless Edrid.’

“ ‘ Ha !’ exclaimed Valois, ‘ perhaps the boy was connected in the necromancy of Jacques de Lor ;’ and his eyes gleamed with pleasure in the hope of some circumstance that might assist his nefarious attempt on De Marigni.

“ ‘ Not that, noble Prince ; but Edrid wore about his person a jewel of inestimable value—a gem which once sparkled in the

vest of Richard of England ;—no doubt the experienced eye of the jeweller discovered the treasure, and, to obtain its possession, propelled the youth's sad destiny forward.'

“ ‘What!’ said De Valois, scornfully, ‘another sacrilege or theft? By the Holy Virgin, it must have been some foul fiend that animated Edrid's form: methought his voice was superhuman!’

“ ‘Not so, proud Prince,’ I answered, with some of his own scorn ; ‘but mark the strange vicissitude,—this withered form broken down by sorrow, this countenance stamped with the lines of passion and woe, and from whose very sight Louis turned with loathing, deeming it unworthy of even the breath of this corrupt world, was once the admiration,—nay, the adored of princes,—great, beautiful, and proud as yourself, Valois, and who, not in humility, but in the grovelling of earthly passion, in the pursuit of self-gratification, have knelt at my feet to win a passing smile ; know, too, that Edrid was the son of the proudest and

best Knight in Christendom ; but father and son are both gone. Where are they ?— and what am I ?’ Saying these words I wept convulsively.

“ The manner of the Valois was more subdued, as he said,—

“ ‘ Freida, from the beginning I discovered your bearing was far above your position, and it had been a painful lesson of humility to high descent if such a youth as Edrid proved to be the offspring of a low hind, some emancipated serf. Freida, you have excited an interest in our bosom.’ De Valois generally spoke of himself in the plural. ‘ On Wednesday evening, or perhaps Thursday, or next day, we may call, to learn more particulars of your past life ; at present time presses. I have said the Hungarians await our presence at the banquet, thus my absence may give offence to those I respect.’

“ ‘ Prince, to-morrow or next day to me may never come ; nor, should I relate my tale, would it glad your ears. Three hours hence and I had resolved to die ; those

three hours are no more, and I not only live, but feel that, until I obtain revenge on the wretches who destroyed my son, I could not die : my unsatisfied spirit would not escape its earthly thralldom. But enough of self. Charles de Valois, claim from Hubert Clisson the gem worn by my son ; it is in the form of a Templar's cross, the rubies of inestimable value. Proud Prince, if ever a gleam of virtue shone on your dark soul, it was the emotion of tenderness you felt for poor Edrid. Keep the Cross in remembrance of the transient brightness, it may plead your cause in the Christians' heaven, to which superstition dedicated the gem.'

"What mean you, wretch, thus to address me?' he exclaimed, again stamping in his fury. 'Have you no respect? no fear, thus to insult a noble? Know you not that by a word,—a single word,—I can doom you to death?'

"Springing on my feet, and confronting him with a look fierce and scornful as his own ; for, at the recapitulation of such suf-

ferings, my brain began to scorch and wander, I vehemently exclaimed,—

“ Know, proud Prince, that I,—who witnessed the siege of Acre, where the soldiers of the blood-red Croisses, in their fierce hostilities against Saladin’s of darker hue, waved death and desolation around, till princes, nobles, Templars, knights, squires, pages, varlets, serving-men,—all sunk amidst their disbelieving enemies in one vast mass of destruction,— can know no fear. And, as to pride, what then to their *earthly* weal availed to the Christian his symbol of Saviour or Saint? what to the Syrian his Crescent banner, or bright Damascus blade? the Mameluke’s bow, the Bedouin’s spear, or the Ethiopian’s flail? What, I say, availed these, and a hundred other badges and distinctions of country, of religion, and of pride,—all were amalgamated into one common heap; nay, more degrading still, the carcasses of horses, mules, asses, dogs, were cast among them! Think you, De Valois, from that hideous monument of intolerance, violence, and

corruption,— any voice arose to claim precedency, any finger to point out the heraldic emblazonry of shield or scutcheon, or proudly to mark the ancient race from which it had sprung,—no, a few short days, and even LOVE could not have recognised its earthly idol, for heavy rain fell, and decomposition's fearful work was rapid. Syria's sun rose in its Oriental splendour, and the flesh withered, and the bones whitened and dried beneath its fervid, glorious rays. Then from the West came a mighty storm, and these wretched remains of mortality were scattered around, in wild confusion. Ha! Count de Valois, where then was the nobles' power? where the conqueror's wreath of glory? the triumph of success, or the shame of defeat?—silent all!”

Here Freida paused, uttered a scornful laugh, and then, with renewed energy, proceeded,—

“ ‘ All this, proud Prince, have I witnessed; nay, more; hope not, then, to dazzle me with high-sounding names or

glittering exteriors; and as to fear, the dread of annihilation conquered, what have I to fear? But, Prince, there are sympathies,—passions which attract beings to each other,—mysterious outbreakings of nature, which oft draw mortals together, in defiance of the factitious conventions of society, levelling all distinctions; on this principle, Valois, you and I should go hand and hand together. Nay, start not,—the same DEMON passion, Revenge, rules us both: mine is the most excusable,—if sin admit of degrees,—for, while your dark purpose springs from the mortification of self-love, and a grasping ambition, mine emanates from the pure source of maternal affection,—a sentiment respected by Christ, who rebuked not the widow's affliction, but raised her son from death;—and parental affection is ennobled by God's example, who, as the greatest proof of love to guilty man, gave up His beloved Son as an atonement. Count, this is your Christian faith.'

“While I was thus vehemently speak-

ing, De Valois paled and shuddered. I did not suppose his haughty nature could have been so subdued. I heard him mutter a prayer; I saw him draw a crucifix from his bosom, and press it to his lips; after that I have no recollection, for I was seized by one of those fits to which I had become subject, and fell staggering to the ground.

“I recovered from my weakness unaided; a long and heavy sleep succeeded, from which I awoke unrefreshed and burning with fever. In the confusion of my mind memory became indistinct, but I had an instinctive wish for air. Valois must have hurried off, for he left all the doors wide open. I cannot say what ideas regulated my conduct; but I perfectly remember going out of my room, and then locking and barring it carefully, and in the same manner the outside door, and hiding the keys in my bosom. It was early in the evening, the barrier was unclosed.—I passed into Montfaucon. Towards the left side of the bank, at a short

distance, was a fine screen of elm-trees; they looked so fresh, so inviting, that, quick as exhaustion would permit, I hurried towards them, and lay tranquilly under their shade. All this was mere instinct. On the instant, I had no powers of reasoning, again I sank into sleep. The heat of the past day had been succeeded by a heavy shower, which might have injured a more delicate person; to me, inured to various climes, and of late to a vicissitude of hardships, it only brought refreshment: the fever raging in my brain was cooled, and though I awakened several times from an oppression in my breathing, I again fell into slumber; and so the night passed away; and the memorable Wednesday, on which depended the fates of the Marignis and Jacques de Lor, rose in all its summer splendour.

“Still in forgetfulness I lay protected from the mid-day sun by a canopy formed by the foliage of the trees, when, suddenly, from the quarter of the Temple, I heard a loud din of voices, intermingled with the

barking of dogs, the clattering of horses' hoofs, and the most demoniacal yells. Every moment the noise approached towards the barrier; curiosity, not unmixed with terror, roused me from the repose of lassitude and exhaustion. Clinging to a tree I arose, supporting myself against its trunk. A moment, and the old tower near the gateway, and which had sheltered poor Edrid and me in our desolation, was surrounded by the multitude. Then on the air rose the most horrible imprecations, and 'Drag forth the witch' — 'the accursed infidel' — 'the sorceress,' — 'the committer of sacrilege' — 'the abettor of the magician, Jacques de Lor, and the Marignis,' and a hundred other vile epithets, seconded by blasphemous words and oaths. Then sledge-hammers were applied to the door, which in my raving I had secured, but it resisted the force. Formerly the warden of the barrier had resided in the tower, and as it was a post of great consequence during the wars with the Empire it had been well strengthened. However, a few moments more must have done the business; but

the frantic mob gloated for their prey, and 'Smoke the witch in her lair!' 'Burn her to ashes along with her cursed charms!' and such-like phrases, now resounded quickly, and blazing flambeaux were applied.

"In the midst of this fury a circumstance occurred which created the horror of the wretches, and rendered me more than ever obnoxious to their ignorance and superstition. The tower had been built in a circular form of the rudest architecture, and at the height of every six feet or thereabouts a thick beam of oak had been inserted, on what principle I am ignorant. These now took fire; thus the building became girt round with glowing zones of flame; the effect was brilliant and imposing. Immediately it was imputed to supernatural agency; half the mob fled in terror, the others remained, expecting to see me rise in some marvellous manner above the burning roof; thousands of crucifixes were elevated to keep me off; and the yells of triumph over an unfortunate woman were hushed into prayers against her infernal

powers. In the midst, the roof fell in with a terrible crash, and the circles of light vanished in a dense smoke. Supposing me crushed beneath the ruins, the multitude shouted, danced in triumph, performing antics which would have disgraced the orgies of demoniacs. And these were the boasted sons of France, the professors of Christianity ! Yet why should I condemn France or the Nazarenes ? I have found all nations and people much alike ; evil predominates in this sad world.

“ This scene shocked and terrified me ; I was ready to die, but not to be torn to pieces by an infuriated mob ; and as the crowd were dispersing after their frantic act, seeing some of the people advance towards the elm-grove, the fever rose to frenzy, my grasp of the tree loosed, and I fell ; there was a consciousness of having dashed my head against the bole of a tree, then an acute pain ; after which, for a long period, I was oblivious to all objects or feelings.

CHAPTER XIV.

“We are now as enemies face to face !
God be judge between us ; for he will be just,
And will show who is noble, and who is base.”

LANE'S *Modern Egyptians*.

“AFTER these terrible scenes a long period elapsed ere I was sufficiently convalescent to attend to passing events. I seemed to be suffering under the apathy of a moral stupor, feeling no interest, existing but not living. When roused by the Amazonian to the necessity of taking a part in surrounding objects, then I discovered that I was with the horde encamped on the banks of the Danube near Buda. It was their most favoured locality, from the profound solitude of encompassing immeasurable forests. With few exceptions the best of the tribe had departed for India ;

those who remained only conversed in the wild jargon. Their ignorance proved my assertions that the horses in which they trafficked were the superior animals: nay, the asses they rode might compete with them in intellect. But the recklessness springing from my inconsolable grief for Edrid rendered me indifferent to their rudeness; and observing a change in the manners of my Amazonian mother, I imputed it to her mortification at this falling off in the horde whom, as their leader, she had formerly taken such pains to improve. Her avoidance of me was most unaccountable. My presence seemed obnoxious to her; and yet I could find no cause for this change of manner.

“One evening, as I sat on a rock commanding an extensive view of the Danube, and in the immediate vicinity of one of the hot springs, which our tribe chose out as being salubrious, the Amazonian suddenly joined me, and sitting near, in a cold, stern voice, said, ‘Freida, my horde have become a mortification, not a pride;

and your presence so painful, I can no longer control my dislike. Consequently, I have decided on proceeding to Hindostan. Thus this is our last meeting.'

" 'To Hindostan!' I exclaimed. 'Oh, how gladly would I accompany you if I could first be revenged on my Edrid's executioners!'

" 'You, Freida, who have become a basilisk to my sight, a serpent in my path, accompany me! Never!'

" I exclaimed indignantly, 'How have I, your child, awakened this unnatural hatred?'

" 'By causing the death of Jacques de Lor, ever dearer to me than all the world beside,' she answered.

" 'Jacques dead!' I exclaimed with emotion, 'Oh! say not so. I know that from sorrow and sickness I suffered an aberration of mind; but still it appears that shortly before I escaped from the tower chamber facing Montfaucon, Jacques was with me. O mother! do not say that Jacques is dead.'

“ ‘ Yes ! and you betrayed him to that worse than demon Charles de Valois. Freida, by joining with that prince of power and cruelty, you wrought in Paris scenes of horror never to be forgotten. Strange that from a wretch insignificant as thou art such wide-spreading desolation could arise.’

“ ‘ Let me entreat of you,’ I cried with energy, ‘ to explain all that occurred after the burning of the tower. That I remember well ; but beyond my memory is a blank. Did the Marignis escape ? and how came Jacques involved ? Oh ! look not thus scornfully. I should, I know, have made these inquiries before ; but my every thought has dwelt exclusively on Edrid, my lost son ; and then you, my parent, so shunned me, that till this evening no converse has passed between us ; and to this hour I remain ignorant by what means I reached you, and wherefore, while protecting and succouring, you still view me with abhorrence. Alas ! My sufferings should have awakened sympathy, not anger, in my parent.’

“ ‘ I protect and succour you, Freida,’ she answered, with austerity, ‘ not because I gave you birth, for as a child I renounce you ; but, as you already know, the mysterious vows which unite me to you as one initiated, as a SUPERIOR into our forbidden rites, oblige me, through weal or woe, through sickness or health, through vice or virtue, to uphold you. ’ Thus my duty is imperative ; and by its laws I must not keep you in ignorance of matters which may concern your safety. So attend while I explain the strange tissue of circumstances by which your life was preserved, and you again brought to the horde.

“ ‘ Some weeks previous to the destruction of the tower of the barrier, an epoch upon which your memory seems to dwell, Jacques sent to entreat that I would join him in Paris, where he and his beloved Shadi were in much misery. I had ever opposed his union with the Hindoo ; and imputing their misfortunes to discontent, which might end in separation, I postponed joining them until I made arrangements

for—during my absence—the support of the tribe.

“ ‘On reaching Paris I was shocked at finding Jacques, on the charge of magic, had been cast into the lowest dungeon of the city prison: gold, of which I possessed abundance, won over his jailor,—it is needless to dwell in detail on our meeting. In a few words my virtuous, but visionary son explained, that while Charles de Valois persecuted every person connected with sorcery, still, inconsistently enough, placing faith in its influence, he entertained an inordinate wish to acquire its knowledge; and for this purpose, late one evening, visited Jacques, who chanced at the time to be out; but as De Valois haughtily entered his apartment, he beheld Shadi, beautiful as one of the houris of the Mahometan’s Paradise, dancing for the amusement of Marigni’s children, who were occasionally permitted to visit her; and as Shadi whirled around, her beautifully turned ankles and arms being naked, except from the circles of gold and small bells which

encircled them, sportively playing her tambourines, and performing a hundred graceful movements expressive of the passions, Charles de Valois imbibed towards her a passionate love, and from that hour marked her as his prey. Resistance he never anticipated. The proudest ladies in France would have gloried in his attentions. Not so Shadi; the dissolute Count roused in her pure mind a strong antipathy, which she took no pains to disguise. He offered wealth to this new idol, and hoped to dazzle her by luxuries and power; but Shadi, joyous as a child, was of singular tastes, and considered his offers as trifling; her whole soul being devoted to Jacques, and very dear was she to the visionary.

“ ‘ Every sentiment now urged on De Valois to obtain possession of the Hindoo; and not deigning to disguise his intentions to De Lor, he swore that if Shadi did not yield to his wishes he would have her condemned, as an idolatress, to the flames. Jacques merely treated this as a threat; he had not yet learned to what excess of

wickedness pride and passion lead those possessed of POWER to execute their purpose.

“ ‘After this, for a time, De Valois seemed to have lost view of Shadi, in pursuing his revenge on Marigni; but in trying to seduce De Lor to betray his patron he was equally unsuccessful, and now again Shadi was to be the sacrifice if Jacques persisted in his principles of truth and honour.

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“ ‘It was evening when, for the last time, De Valois entered the cell of Jacques, to whom he had allowed twelve hours to decide whether he would give false evidence against the Marignis, and on that very evening De Valois had been treated by Shadi with scorn and loathing—no doubt this infuriated him still farther.

“ ‘Gently, but steadily, De Lor, represented the impossibility of acting towards his patron with ingratitude.

“ ‘De Lor,’ furiously interrupted De Valois, ‘be not deceived, if you reject my entreaties you know the penalty—Shadi dies.’

“ ‘ Even so,’ De Lor sadly replied ;
‘ I cannot act in opposition to my principles of truth and justice.’

“ ‘ Wretched visionary !—then the crime of Shadi’s death—if the destruction of an infidel be a crime—rest on your head. Again, I demand, will you or will you not give evidence against Enguerand Marigni ?’

“ ‘ Never !’ emphatically replied De Lor.

“ ‘ So be it,’ retorted the Count, as he retired.

* * * *

“ ‘ That night the bells of Nôtre Dame, at the midnight hour, announced that another Pagan had died by fire. The victim was Shadi the Hindoo, wife of the sorcerer Jacques de Lor—such was the public announcement.

“ ‘ These events were too frequent in Paris to awaken much interest—not so the trial of Marigni, which was to take place at the Temple—and the whole population were fearfully excited in its result.

“ ‘ The ill-fated Minister had supplicated for a simple act of mercy—that of being

examined in the Hall of Justice and in full court; but he was defeated by the machinations of Charles, Count de Valois, who, it was well known, had by bribes won over forty of the principal barons of France to give false evidence.'

"I interrupted, 'May I inquire how learned you these facts?'

"'From the jailor,' she replied. 'I won him to my service by bribery, and his position enabled him to gain information. Well, Freida, the night previous to this sad trial I spent in Jacques' cell, and he acquainted me of your treachery in winning from him an account of the waxen images, and how, subsequently, you betrayed the secret to De Valois. 'Still,' he said, 'I would see Freida to grant her forgiveness; besides, I have a matter of importance that I wish her to know: it will relieve her bitter affliction.'"

"'Alas! no,' I exclaimed; 'Edrid dead, for me there is no relief.'

"'Cease these interruptions,' retorted the Amazonian, 'and hope not for my sympathy. I said that Marigni's trial was to take place

in the Temple ; a thousand wild fables of his preternatural powers were circulated. Absurd ! for had he possessed them he could have escaped from his prison ; but such was the general panic these rumours awakened, that several of his friends had escaped to England. Thus, in extremity, the high-minded Norman was deserted.

“ ‘ In the disguise of a *blanchisseuse* I forced my way into the Temple, mixing with the rabble crowd in the trial-hall. At first, Enguerand Marigni, in the pride of conscious truth, with a bold eloquence, and his usual warmth of temper being much irritated at perceiving how many of his friends had deserted him, asserted his innocence, pointing out the absurdity of charges which mocked at reason, and of which no evidence could be adduced ; and he demanded that, at least, his trial should be suspended until Louis Hutin, then confined to his couch by illness, could honour the court with his presence.

“ ‘ A demand so just, supported by reasoning at once simple and imposing, affected

the assembly in the prisoner's favour, and they were simultaneously according to his request, when Charles de Valois called out, 'Noble sirs! suspend your judgment still some few moments, and then, if I do not bring forward the most incontrovertible proofs of the Marigni's guilt, and his practice of the black art in its most mysterious form, then, Seigneurs of France, I, Charles, Count de Valois, am content to be executed in the magician's place. It may be, that even now his damning acts are practising to lead to that result.' Having uttered these words, he sounded his silver call thrice.

" 'Within a few moments guards entered, forcing a passage through the crowd to where the chiefs sat on their elevated seats. They were followed by others clad in mourning, and supporting a bier covered with a black velvet pall, emblazoned with the arms of France.

" 'Seigneurs, I command your attention!' cried De Valois; 'and you, bearers, raise the pall.'

" 'Awe-struck, every eye was fixed on the

bier, which, thus uncovered, displayed the image of Louis Hutin, his countenance pale to ghastliness, covered with globules* of perspiration. A loose night-dress was wrapped round the form. So extraordinary was the resemblance, that Marigni, though it was the work of his own hands, for a moment thought it was the dying King thus summoned to condemn him; and the start of agitation he gave was observed, and assisted to prejudice his judges—if the myrmidons of De Valois deserve so grave a title—against him. The appearance created such a sensation of terror and surprise, that it was some time ere composure or silence could be obtained in the court.

“ ‘De Valois, triumphant in success, rose, and in a manner persuasively sad, to suit the solemn subject, and with seeming candour—for he is a finished hypocrite—explained that Enguerand Marigni, by the arts of

* During the commencement of the fourteenth century a loathsome disease, from its effects termed “the sweating-sickness,” prevailed in France: it proved fatal to many persons of distinction.

magic, possessed power to mould the likeness of any person he wished to destroy; and then by the same demoniacal practice—of which he, Charles de Valois, blessed be the Saints! was happily ignorant—to gradually dissolve it away by dark incantations; and as the image thus declined, so did the solid flesh. Other means, too, of causing death by hellish practices the Minister understood. Witness the sudden one of Philip le Bel; but time would not then admit of explanation. On that subject enough. From some sinister motive, or it might be in obedience to the infernal deities which the Marigni and his vile assistant Jacques de Lor worshipped, he was now gradually consuming away the life of Louis Hutin.'

“‘Here De Valois observed, ‘But every Christian criminal deserves the justice of examination.’

“‘He then commanded that several ecclesiastics and physicians should instantly proceed to the Louvre, see the King, and return to report his exact state of illness.

“Meantime to such impossible charges,

involving not only his own life but that of his whole family, the unfortunate Minister, in his simple upright manner and with great energy, said,—

“ ‘Seigneurs ! In my formation of that figure—pointing to the waxen image—I call the Christ to witness my truth, when I assert that my object was merely to gratify the Queen-mother, by presenting her with a likeness of her favourite child, Louis Hutin—this being her birth-day, the presentation I had proposed should take place ; but by a melancholy coincidence, on the very evening of the morning that my work was finished, and I took great pride in its execution’ (he sighed deeply) ‘I was seized and cast into prison.

“ ‘Observe, Seigneurs, I had placed my work in a secret cabinet off my suite of apartments—by some means of artificial heat it has been thus cruelly disfigured.’ (He looked anxiously towards it.) ‘My enemies must have been even those I trusted in. But, barons of France, summon reason to your aid ! Just reflect, why should I wish

for the death of my royal patron and kind friend? and wherefore should I destroy a work which cost me so much thought and trouble? For my delight in an art now brought to witness against me amounts to infatuation.'

“ ‘ This defence rather injured than served the Minister's cause. Genius alone can comprehend the rapture with which those elevated by its inspirations view the works of their own creation — emanations of spirit, which promise to connect them with life long after the hand which then traces them has mouldered in the dust. Truly, to the sons of genius, the past and the to-come seem familiar as the present; but does this superior intelligence lead to happiness? No, — as I have always said — the fruit of knowledge, by teaching us to despise our own grovelling nature, is full of bitterness. Poor Marigni! even with the fear of a horrible death before his eyes, was fretted at the disfigurement of his image — one of his creations.

“ ‘ Louis Hutin at the period was suffer-

ing under an extreme attack of the sweating sickness, of which thousands were then dying throughout France. It is needless to enter into a full account of the method pursued by ecclesiastics and physicians—chosen creatures of De Valois—to persuade the weak, though not ill-disposed monarch, that his illness was the result of Marigni's sorcery. There was hope in admitting the belief; as the power to remove the cause, Louis was easily persuaded, lay with himself. Thus—with the fear of death urging him on—the King signed the deed of execution, which condemned the Minister Marigni and his whole family, neither sex nor age were to be spared, to almost immediate execution.

“‘ Impatiently had the royal decision been waited for in the Temple chamber of trial; and when the fatal order was proclaimed, not a voice but the Chancellor of France (he was Bishop of Chalons), and that of Marigni's brother Beauvais, expressed disapprobation. True, several present must have felt the cruelty, falsity, and despotism of the act; but self-interest

guided their conduct: and the more confident they were of the Minister's innocence the louder they declaimed on his guilt. Thus hoping to persuade themselves and others that their opinions were just.'

“ ‘ Charles Count de Valois resolved to quaff the cup of vengeance to the dregs. O Freida! shudder at the confidence you placed in that demon, when I acquaint you that he sternly refused the permission of Enguerand being permitted to take leave of his family and to make some few arrangements, though four hours' reprieve for the purpose was all the Minister supplicated.

“ ‘ On hearing this, the high-minded Norman, no longer vehement, with calm dignity yielded to a power that he could not control; and being placed like any low felon in a litter, amidst the shouts, execrations, and insults of a barbarous mob, he was hurried to Montfaucon. In my disguise I followed, though at some distance; unnoticed, but a keen observer.

“ ‘ It was about three in the afternoon; the sun, still high in the heavens, shed

down its rays on De Valois and the forty barons he had bribed, and who now, like triumphant demons, followed the litter; and brightly their armour glanced, and proudly their noble steeds pranced, and loudly yelled out the crowd, 'Down with the accursed magician Marigni and his whole race!' 'Success to the noble Valois!' &c. This seemed to gratify the Count. I had now approached near. The litter drew up to the entrance. De Valois mocked and insulted the prisoner. I did not distinguish the words; but I observed Enguerand kiss his crucifix. Then rising in the litter on his knees, in loud emphatic tones he said, 'Count de Valois, I forgive you. Shortly, and my spirit will be emancipated from this tabernacle of clay, and then your power over it perishes. Man cannot pursue his enemy beyond the grave. As I am innocent of the extraordinary crimes for which I am condemned, may God assoil my suffering soul.

“ ‘ Now, Chieftains, attend to my last words connected with life and its cares,

Chieftains, with many of you for years have I lived in goodly fellowship. We have feasted in pleasure, and passed the wine-cup in conviviality; and for small guerdon have you traduced me, and given false witness to my confusion. Still for the sake of Him who bore insult and death for man, I forgive you, as I hope to be forgiven. Yet, of a truth, I find this more difficult than even to pardon De Valois—my professed and open enemy. Urged by a furious passion, he pursued his victim; and, however inexcusable the deeds of passion, some good may still rest in the spirit which yields to them: not so in the timidity and fawning to power, and in the mean cupidity which rendered you, Seigneurs, the mere tools of De Valois. Mark me, the Count views such conduct with contempt!’

“‘Hush! hush!’ interrupted the Bishop of Paris, ‘this, my friend,’ he gently laid his hand on Marigni’s head—‘savours too much of earthly passion. Short time has been allowed for your soul’s preparation. Now, De Valois, in the name of the holy

Church, I command you to retire with your chieftains to a proper distance, where you may witness the execution of your enemy's sad doom ; but the rites to which all Christians are entitled—ere the spirit's departure—shall not be disturbed.'

“ ‘ This order was instantly obeyed. Soldiers drove off the mob. I was still wending my way towards the Temple, when the ringing of bells and the shouts of the multitude announced that Marigni was no more. As having been the friend of Jacques, I regretted his fate.

“ ‘ With the assistance of the jailor I had formed a scheme for De Lor's escape, which appeared feasible. I learned that you still resided in the old tower of Montfaucon. If I am not mistaken, Edrid's execution preceded Marigni's some ten days.' Here I would have explained accurately, but the Amazonian fiercely said,—

“ ‘ Of what import are these calculations? Once for all, your amiable brother, far from resenting your treachery, nobly attempted to defend it on the principle of

your inordinate love for Edrid ; and poor Jacques fancied, that could he have an hour's conversation with you, that he might administer consolation to your despair.'

" ' Now I must be brief. To satisfy him, I hastened to Montfaucon. Never can I forget the scene which presented itself: just as I reached the spot, the tower was encircled with flames. Though I had ceased to love or esteem you, still, Freida, supposing that you were within, I could not suppress a cry of horror. This attracted some of the petty authorities — men, whom the jailor subsequently told me were emancipated slaves—abject spirits, as the best tools to work out his evil deeds, were ever chosen by De Valois' tortuous policy. On my uttering the cry, several of these wretched beings gathered around me. 'Ho! this withered *blanchisseuse* dares to mourn the fate of a sorceress; here dash her into the flames!' I cannot say, from the terror I suffered, how I escaped to hide myself. I rushed into a grove of elms; and as I hurried on I discovered you lying on the earth—a stream

of blood issuing from a deep cut at the side of your head. Immediately I concluded that, like myself, you had fled for shelter, and must have fallen. I bandaged up the wound ; and when the shades of night deepened, with difficulty I bore you to the Jews' quarter—for a few of the Israelites, though in disguise, still loiter in Paris—where I lodged ; all being prepared for my escape next day with Jacques.

“ ‘Leaving you on my couch, with early dawn I hastened to the Temple prison, and there heard the fearful intelligence that my noble-minded, though visionary son, in despair for the death of Marigni, and which he solely imputed to his having intrusted to you the secret of the waxen images—also, from the loss of Shadi—had terminated his existence.

“ ‘Do not dare to offer sympathy,’ cried the Amazonian, as I would have wept my regret. ‘Well, with De Lor’s death, the measure of my woe was full. I carried you—assisted by Caleb the Suabian, one of the tribe—to where I had encamped my

people ; and only waited—as in duty bound—until you were competent to learn these particulars. And now, Freida, farewell ! We meet no more !’

“I flung myself at her feet : she turned away in scorn—descended into the valley—and took her departure to some distant land. I have never since heard of her.

CHAPTER XV.

BEATRIX VISCONTI.

“ She for whom,
'Twixt beautiful and good, I cannot say
Which name was fitter.”—DANTE.

“THE horde was discontented at the desertion of their leader, towards whom they experienced the habitual and instinctive affection similar to that we discover in dogs to their masters. In honour of her, they would have chosen me chief, but I shrank from them with terror. Still not daring openly to irritate the fierce race, under the plea of seeking out the Amazonian, I appointed, during my absence, Caleb the Suabian to fill the post of leader. He was

a man of peculiar beauty of form and herculean strength, but void of intellect, yielding like an animal to any power he respected or feared. Impossible to say which of those sentiments influenced him.

“By my advice, he resolved to collect some musicians and dancers, and in disguise travel about with a few of these to earn money, as the tribe had become miserably poor—nearly reduced to pauperism.

“My health was now restored, and, in the contemplation of revenge, my spirit rose from the torpor of apathy. Still, every hope of my fell purpose seemed vain, being impotent of power. So I resolved to gratify a wish that for years had haunted me—that of seeing Beatrix Visconti, my happy rival with the Templar. Of course, the proud dame would scorn the humble pilgrim who dared approach her threshold—for in disguise of a pilgrim I should, as the only chance of safety, travel. But what cared I for her pride? Moreover, my heart palpitated with a desire to see her son Rho-

dolphe—the child of Guy D'Auvergne—the brother of Edrid!

“It was early in the afternoon of the 19th of last September, that for the first time I stood on the banks of the river, overhanging which rose in feudal grandeur the Lady Beatrix's baronial castle, flanked by its towers of strength and heavy battlements, and high above all waved the Eagles of the Empire and of the Ghibelline. The sun, still high in the heavens, shed its glowing rays over the venerable pile, throwing it out in full relief against the dark pine-forest, which, extending to a vast distance, rose behind; while the pure waters of the Iser, sparkling and sporting in the declining light, bounded rapidly forward in its course, as if impatient to mingle with the wide flowing Danube, expanding to enfold it within its heaving bosom.

“At that hour all had retired for refreshment or rest, and the scene presented a calm repose. Ever and anon a servitor crossed over the drawbridge. At these times I essayed to address them, but a timidity I

had never before experienced checked my purpose, and a deep sense of humiliation oppressed me as I contemplated the magnificence with which my rival was surrounded. At length, on perceiving some pilgrims pass over the bridge, I followed them into a triangular court, in which was spread abundant food for paupers or pilgrims—a noble charity.

“ Having refreshed myself, I boldly demanded to be conducted to the presence of Dame Beatrix ; and to my surprise, far from opposing the wish, servitors wearing the badges of the Visconti conducted me through suites of apartments, until I reached the one she occupied. On throwing open the door they retired.

“ Faded in health, fatigued by my journey, poor, desolate, humbled, I leaned for support against the richly gilt and carved fret-work, and gazed on the superbly attired form of Beatrix, who, seated on a chair of state, was occupied in examining a finely illuminated Bible. A priest stood near explaining the subjects. At some distance sat

four young ladies engaged with embroidery. The chamber was large, lofty, and seemed gorgeous ; but I had no interest in pomp—one object engaged me. How was I fallen, when I who so oft had sat at the head of D'Auvergne's distinguished guests, now stood as a culprit at the threshold of his betrothed, and I, too, had been betrothed to him, caressed as the wife of his bosom, and courted by the proudest chiefs in Christendom! The recollection was too agonising. A rush of blood to my heart was followed by a sensation of fainting—I dreaded a return of fits—I gasped for support, a groan burst forth. I clung to the entrance.

“ ‘How is this?—what has occurred?’ exclaimed Lady Beatrix, starting up and approaching. ‘Speak!’ addressing the servitors, who stepped forward: they respectfully explained my wish to be ushered into her presence.

“As she stood opposite, intently gazing into my face, I took courage to examine her; one glance was sufficient to impress her appearance on my mind.

“Time had dealt leniently with Beatrix. Tall, graceful, of a full though not heavy form, she was still eminently handsome,—lovely, I may add,—from the bland expression of her almost divine countenance; she must have been some eight or ten years my senior, but looked far younger. The dress suited her position and style of beauty. A black Damascus silk, of the richest texture, embroidered in wreaths of gold, silver, and pearl, with occasional brilliants; a broad band of ermine edged the robe, marking her high degree; her head-gear consisted of a kerchief also embroidered, twisted in a curious fashion, being fastened at the back of her head and drawn very low on the ears and neck; to the left side was a small white plume fastened by a viper of sparkling gems, mostly rubies: this ornament was peculiar to the Ghibellines; she wore another in her bosom. I had long despised the gauds of life,—so incompetent to convey happiness,—this experience had taught; yet, at the moment, I was obliged to feel the influence which externals

hold over the loftiest mind or the saddest heart; and the consciousness of my sordid state, though it did not grieve, humbled me. Confused, abashed, regretting my intrusion, with downcast looks, I remained silent.

“ ‘ You seem ill, — unhappy, pilgrim. Say, can I relieve you? Speak !’

“ ‘ Never had a voice of such sweet gentleness fallen on my ear; expecting scorn and insult, this kindness overcame me, and when I would have spoken tears fell rapidly.

“ ‘ You appear much exhausted,’ continued Beatrix, again addressing me. Then making a sign to some of her maidens, they advanced, and, by her command, placed me in the deep embrasure of one of the casements, admitting the free air, and bringing reviving drops. All this time I remained quite passive. Seeing me recovering, the Lady Beatrix spoke,—

“ ‘ Stranger, I understand you expressed a particular wish for an interview with me; if your business is not momentous, would it not be advisable to postpone it? Here you

can find shelter and rest while you require them.'

"This was taken as a dismissal; for one of the attendants demanded,—

"‘Lady, where is this stranger to be placed?’

"I now summoned courage, and, hastily saluting her in the Eastern fashion, requested permission to speak a few words in private. She started at my mode of address, and I saw her colour change rapidly: ‘Willingly,’ she answered, then waved her hand to the attendants, who instantly disappeared; with more ceremony she dismissed the priest. Then turning to me with quickness and agitation,—

"‘Now, stranger, speak without fear: we are alone!’

"I had kept the loose mantle of a pilgrim folded round my form, covering my face with the hood. Now again I prostrated myself at her feet to kiss the hem of her garment; my mantle fell off, and I cast my eyes piteously in her face; she drew back, exclaiming,—

“ ‘ No !—it cannot be !—and yet this salaam, and the eyes of such peculiar shade !—but no !—it cannot be !—and yet ——’ She clasped her hands together, and, with emotion, exclaimed, ‘ Speak, stranger ! and relieve my curiosity : it has become painful !’ I hesitated. In a tone of command she added, ‘ Nay, if it be fear deters you, speak !—and, though the ban of the Empire is on you, by that Empire I swear not to betray your confidence !—nay, more, in all Christian wants will uphold and serve you ! But, first, rise from that attitude,—I like it not,—such prostration of the body should be offered to God or the Blessed Virgin alone, and will rather revolt me from your supplication than win me to your purpose.’

“ ‘ I rose slowly, and, in a firm voice, said,—

“ ‘ Lady, I came not here to seek your gifts ; this lordly residence, and all it contains, could not afford me a moment’s satisfaction : my spirit would mock at its gorgeousness, and my fevered, careworn form find more genial repose beneath the spread-

ing oak or the cavern's dark recess; and these afford their shelter alike to all.'

"As I spoke, Lady Beatrix sunk back on a seat, and, in low trembling accents, said,—

"'It is, then, as I thought; you are Freida the Jongleur, the beloved of ——'

"She buried her face in her hands and groaned aloud. I know not what ideas darted through my mind; but my darker passions prevailed, and, in a tone of triumph, I took up her words, exclaiming,—

"'Of Guy D'Auvergne, the Knight Templar: the same, noble lady!'

"There was a long pause. I saw the big tears trickle through the fingers of that proud lady, and I felt joy, for the wide contrast in our position had struck on and corroded my heart; but as the Christian priests exorcise the spirits of evil by the name of their Redeemer, so the gentle goodness of the Lady Beatrix allayed my fierce passions. Her first movement, after recovering her emotion, was to reach her hand towards me. What can she mean? I

thought. But I did not accept the offered kindness.

“ ‘Will you not,’ she said, laying her hand in mine, ‘accept this pledge of friendship? All whom D’Auvergne loved are dear to me. Alas! there can be no jealousy, —no rivalship,—for the dead: you do not accept the kindness?’

“ ‘No!’ I replied, with bitterness; ‘friendship cannot exist between the proud lady of this palace and the outlawed Jongleur. It were but a mockery,—a play; and Freida’s days of acting have long since passed away.’

“ In a voice of gentle soothing, she said,

“ ‘If, on the one hand, the circumstances of birth and fortune have placed a gulf between us; on the other, are we not united by our sympathies? Have we not both loved — both lamented the same object? Has not the Templar’s terrible death, while it effaced his errors, still further endeared his memory?’

“ Even this did not subdue my haughty, fierce temper; and I replied,—

“ ‘ Even then, lady, there was no equality. To the Knight I was but as the bee, who supplied sweets to his viands ; or the worm, that spun his silken robes of pride ; a creature, to minister to his pleasure ; that satisfied, I partook of the insect’s fate,—despised and forgotten ; while you, lady, were folded in his bosom, your angry jealousy soothed by caresses and tenderness ; my name, perhaps, execrated as the cause of disunion ; wonder and disgust expressed that the Jongleur was ever loved ; bitterer still, his bright child forgotten in the pride of gazing on your son—his HEIR ! ’

“ ‘ Freida,’ answered Lady Beatrix, ‘ you have just cause to complain, for your fate was a sad one, and I fear the world has dealt hardly by you. But wrong not the memory of the ill-fated Knight ; you were deserted, but not forgotten. I was soothed in my just jealousy, but not at your expense ; nay, far from it. The Templar often spoke—too rapturously, I thought—of the fair form that had taught him to break his plighted vows ; of the genius which elevated

you above your sex ; of the many languages you knew ; and marvelled that you, an Infidel, still ever reached forth to the needy the boon of charity.'

" My heart was moved at this tenderness. I clasped my hands together,—

" ' Noble dame,' I cried, ' in mercy deal not after this manner with me ! Misfortune has indurated my heart to bear up against all evils. I am a solitary being, isolated from society, loved by none, and with nothing to love, only linked to earth by one dark passion. Drive me, then, noble lady, from your presence ! Call to your slaves to hoot at me, and I shall laugh you all to scorn ! But do not cast on me these looks of pity, these words of tenderness ; do not attempt to soften my despair, for it is the armour of my strength !'

" ' Would I could frame my speech to your pleasure, Freida,' answered Lady Beatrix, mildly ; ' wounded by neglect, you now despise consolation ; but learn that which must afford it. Even in his last solemn hours, while the stake was preparing

to consume his body—though the Templar devoutly believed that his misery originated in the vengeance of an offended God for his illicit connexion with an Infidel, a strange woman,—a crime against which the Holy Scriptures so emphatically warn us—still he never condemned you. No, while he execrated himself, admitting no palliation for his sin, he spoke of your youth, your education among Infidels, your works of humanity performed to all in distress, no matter their creed. Your being a Pagan, this liberality of sentiment was no crime; and, Freida, even on the scaffold, where he received sentence, as I knelt at his feet, the Templar obtained my promise, cheerfully granted, that I would seek you out, and, if possible, win you over to Christianity—to heaven; but, above all things, he desired me to bear to you his last fervent prayer, that you would have his son, your fair child, baptized in Christ, if only to lessen the tortures of his (D'Auvergne's) condemned spirit for these sins of his mortal life. And, Freida, the noble Guy—for he

was noble, spite of this taint of earthly passion—from his large possessions bequeathed to you and to his son Edrid—methinks he called him—vast wealth. Pass we over my sorrow at the Templar's horrible death. It is not for the Christian to murmur at the decree of God's inscrutable wisdom. The holy angels upheld me in my great affliction; from the blessed saints and martyrs arose the incense of hope. True, my beloved one was dead; but his soul, purified by its dark passage, will rise to eternal glory and life! Oh, Freida! Freida! do not add to the torments of his spirit by withholding his child from the true God!’

“‘Lady,’ I replied, ‘if your faith be true, Edrid is, ere now, united to his father in the realms of bliss, and Guy D’Auvergne’s soul released from purgatory, for my ill-fated son was a baptized Christian. By a strange fatality, the deserted youth died in a manner similar to his proud father;’ and, as I spoke these terrible words, I was seized with one of my fits, now ever the result of violent excitement. Without calling for

assistance, Lady Beatrix supported my head, scattered essences over me, and, as tears fell on my face, exclaimed,—

“ ‘ Alas, my poor Freida ! how I pity you ! A mother myself, and to an only son, I can well appreciate the extent of your sorrows ! Oh, divine Mary, mother of God ! stand forth with grace between me and such suffering ! and oh, thou Queen of Heaven ! implore thy blessed Son to shed the grace of his glory to enlighten this benighted spirit ! ’

“ After this, some time elapsed ere the pious Beatrix regained self-command, and then we conversed over the melancholy past. I acquainted her with Edrid’s fate, my supposed death, and how the burning of my tower was sanctioned by Louis Hutin, who, on the morning of the day it had taken place, had issued an edict that if ever I was seen in Paris, my life was to be forfeited ; and that this act was still in being, should my existence be discovered. Lady Beatrix then explained, that after the death of the Templar she had made every inquiry relative to me and Edrid, and at length traced us to Jaffa. Immediately she sent a trusty squire

to see us, and acquaint me with D'Auvergne's rich bequest. My residence on the coast was easily discovered. By a fatal chance I was then in Damascus ; but the person who had it in keeping being a follower of the tribe, probably supposing that the Christians only sought me for some hostile purpose, represented that I had taken my child and again joined the Saxon Jongleurs, a party of whom were then in Upper Egypt, where, most probably, I had gone. After this, inquiry was deemed useless. Thus you see, Gaultier, in all things my evil destiny prevailed ; for had I then met the noble Lady Beatrix, the whole colour of my fortunes would have been changed, Edrid might still have lived, and I be a Christian.

“So far did Beatrix carry her consideration for my feelings, that she avoided alluding to her son, fearing that the mention of Rhodolphe might awaken my grief for Edrid. Discovering this, I inquired about him. Then the full tide of tenderness burst forth, and she enumerated his many perfections, tenderly dwelling upon his love for herself. She acquainted me that he was

then in Avignon, where John XXII., in honour of his triple crown, was giving a succession of entertainments previous to removing to the Papal palace, the Vatican. These over, Rhodolphe purposed returning to Munich.

“I now inquired of the noble dame, could she give me any account of Charles de Valois? as, from the period when the Amazonian carried me from Paris into Hungary, no information relative to him had ever reached me. No sooner had I asked the question than I wished it recalled, so much was she agitated. She sank on her knees, and I overheard her, in a low voice, imploring of the Virgin to grant her grace to conquer the angry feelings the memory of him stirred up within her. The noble dame’s devotion was so sincere that she ever found composure from prayer; so, when I would have excused my idle question, she answered, in her soft voice, as follows,—

“‘Nay, Freida, far as I know of that desperate Prince, you shall hear; but my information relative to him is meagre,—

merely what my damsels gather from pilgrims who pass in this direction from the Alps, to whose wondrous regions it has lately become customary with our pious Bavarians to make an annual pilgrimage. From that source I understand that Charles de Valois is at present in Dauphiny, residing in a castle in the forest of Chartreuse; and it was that which so excited me;—she sighed deeply;—‘for know, Freida, it was there, to that castle, after our secret nuptials, that Guy D’Auvergne bore me, glowing, as we both were, with all the rapturous delights of true love, and the anticipations of youth. Alas! how quickly those days of rapture and delight fled! At the period I speak of, the château, built as a place of strength, was merely a castellated mansion, surrounding a quadrangle; but receiving dignity from its gate-house, whose turrets were of an antique Roman fashion, highly ornamented. Having for years been only used as a hunting-lodge, the château was furnished in a rude manner, but such as it was, annually the Prince of Dauphiny, Guy D’Auvergne, and a gallant company,

came to hunt the chamois of the Alps, and the wild boar and deer of the surrounding forests; but, after my visit, the place, to D'Auvergne, became consecrated; and, in the expectation of, at some future period, claiming me as his bride, and placing me as lady paramount over his numerous servitors, he sent to Italy for the far-famed Baptiste Alberti; and the genius of that wonderful man soon metamorphosed the rude hunting-lodge into a noble palace; and which crowds came to see. Unhappily, De Valois was charmed with the residence, and proposed purchasing it at any price. This offended the pride of D'Auvergne, and he resented the offer as an insult; but the Count never ceased to pursue any object of desire; and, after the annihilation of the Templars, their vast possessions being seized by the royal murderers, he claimed the castle as a part of his prize, and Philip le Bel ceded it to him.'

"Here our conversation was interrupted by the seneschal entering to announce that the evening banquet waited her presence.

The noble lady seemed confused ; to relieve the embarrassment, I said,—

“ ‘During my stay in Bavaria, as best befits my lowly state, I shall, with your permission, partake of the hospitality, so charitably spread for the poor and wayfarer.’ So saying, I hurried down to the triangular court.

“ Aware that my intimacy with Beatrix might awaken observation, I never intruded on her presence until late in the evenings, at which period with her damsels, she was free from interruption. During the days I wandered through the beautiful scenery which surrounded the clear waters of the Iser. My health improved from the pure air I breathed, still more from the mind’s repose. I was still anxious to discover De Valois. I placed faith in his friendship, and meant to profit by it to perpetrate my revenge on Hubert Clisson, my innocent son’s executioner, and his base assistant, Père Lagravare. Independent of this grave motive, I wished to know, had the Count sought after the ruby cross—my bridal gift? I now wished to have it presented to Lady Beatrix,

for the Templar in his days of love had assured me that it was an heirloom in the family of Dauphiny, and as such to them invaluable.

“However, my ardent wish to see Rhodolphe, Edrid’s brother, for the present conquered every other sentiment, and his arrival was now expected.

“It was my wont each evening to sit in the apartment of Lady Beatrix, and in despite of her entreaties I preserved a distance, and never partook of refreshment, and then I would recount scenes and tales connected with Palestine. None except Beatrix knew that I was a Pagan—a Jongleur. Woe to me had the fact been suspected, for the Bavarians are a fierce, bigoted race! And the dame, and also her attendant ladies, delighted in the adventures of knights and barons.

“One evening being summoned at an unusually early hour by Lady Beatrix, I entered and found her alone. She embraced me tenderly. Her countenance glowed with joy as she exclaimed,—

“ ‘Rhodolphe returns here on Thursday with a noble company, among whom is his boasted friend the poet Petrarch, and more dear, more welcome still, the Archbishop of Rheims. Oh ! Freida,’ she added, with emotion, ‘to that pious man I owe my present happy state of mind ; but for him my soul had still continued in darkness, and however faint in comparison to the refulgent glory which encompasses the Saints, are the faint glimmerings of my faith, still it teaches me to eschew pride, jealousy, and revenge, and to pray—yes ; believe it, Freida—for mercy towards the persecutors of the Templars.’

“ Again she caressed me, then continued in her soft, persuasive voice,—

“ ‘I know, Freida, that you wish to see the Archbishop, and I have given you a promise that even to vantage you I will not betray your confidence. In return, I make one request, Freida. I entreat, nay, implore, that you will listen to this holy man. It may be that he will obtain divine grace to win you to Christ ; then when this sad transient life has glided away, you will in heaven

be reunited to Edrid. Oh, think what bliss! Oh! Freida, does not the hope delight and raise your thoughts to God? Oh! say you will be a Christian!’

“Inspired by the noble purpose, she fell on her knees, exclaiming,—

“‘Mary, mother of God! Queen of Heaven! for thy blessed Son’s sake, take compassion on this misguided heathen, and soften her heart to the TRUTH.’

“With admiration I gazed on this lovely being, who, amidst the pride of position and the luxuries of wealth, with hundreds to obey her lightest wish, could turn her thoughts, her wishes, to call a sinner to repentance. The humble, the lowly, the wicked, she despised not. I had rivalled her, had been the cause of her Templar’s condemnation, still, like the Christ that she worshipped in spirit and in truth, she reached out her hand to heal the wound of one who had injured her; and though not won from my vow of revenge, still I said,—

“‘Lady, truly may I say, ‘Thou almost persuadest me to be a Christian.’

“ She rose, meekly observing,—

“ ‘ Such power of grace I do not possess. All that I expect, Freida, is your attention to the Archbishop ; he will not betray you. At all events, do not shun his presence.’

“ I demanded, ‘ Wherefore, lady, should I shun his presence ?’

“ ‘ True, Freida ; I forgot,’ she replied, ‘ to acquaint you that Philip V., one of the best monarchs that ever sat on the throne of France, as compensation for the cruel injustice shown to the unfortunate Marignis, not only recalled the Bishop of Beauvais to Paris, but has elevated him to the See of Rheims.’

“ As she spoke, the remembrance of that pious man, his love for Edrid, whom he had won to Christianity, my son’s enthusiasm, my own baseness,—all rose vividly to my mind. Claspings my hands, I gave utterance to a grief whose violence defied control.

“ ‘ Oh ! forgive me, my poor afflicted Freida,’ exclaimed Beatrix. ‘ In my zeal for your reformation, I have outstepped

kindness. To see you thus, shadows my bright joy at my son's return.'

"'Forgive! noble dame; I have nothing to forgive, but all to admire! Heed me not,—I am very wretched!' Tears rolled down my face. 'We must part, lady!'

"'No, Freida,' she said, caressingly; 'my gallant Rhodolphe shall be to you as a son.'

"'And the good archbishop,' hastily I interrupted,—'him I cannot see! Nay, noble dame, have patience; a few words more, and I am gone. To see Rhodolphe, the child of Guy D'Auvergne, the brother of Edrid, was the chief object of my visit here; and now, as your son Rhodolphe is doubly interesting, it seems mockery in one so humble to speak of interest in the heir of this proud mansion; but true piety never scoffs at the unfortunate. Now, as to the prelate, I could not endure to see him; as a true Christian, he would be forgiving and merciful; but, as a human being, he must abhor, loathe the wretch who aided and abetted his enemy, De Valois, in persecuting

his innocent brother —— Nay, noble dame, do not interrupt me ; all you would advance of the purity and intensity of a mother's love as excuse, though kindly meant, is false reasoning all. Edrid's sacrilege was excusable, for he knew not right from wrong ; but I did, and pursued the latter ; stooped my nature, once lofty, to hypocrisy and lies ! Well ! well ! terrible has been the retribution. I am desolate !—hopeless ! —a very wretch !'

“‘Oh, no, Freida !’ she exclaimed, clasping my hand between hers. ‘Turn to God,—a never-failing staff in the hour of sorrow and tribulation ! ‘There is joy in heaven over the repentance of a sinner,’ so says the Holy Book. And, Freida, let us hope that Edrid is there. It may be his spirit intercedes for the beatification of yours ; so I insist,’ she playfully added, ‘to your listening to the prelate as he expounds the blessed Scriptures.’

“‘I am fully acquainted with them,’ I sighed ; ‘but my purpose places a gulf between me and heaven's bright hopes, for

my reason will not permit me to adopt the forms of a creed—the mere prostration of body—while my spirit, in contradistinction, acts in direct opposition to the Gospel's sublime doctrines.'

" 'What can it be? If money suffices, remember that you may, this very moment, command the wealth deposited with me for your use and that of Edrid's, by the Templar. You, Freida, are now the heir.'

" 'It *will* assist my purpose, lady; and of the treasure, for the present, I shall accept of two hundred gold pieces; when more is required, I need not hesitate to apply. . . . Now, lady, thanks!—your spirit is noble as pious, and generous!'

" 'No generosity in granting your own. The basest, I take it, would not play false to the dead,' she sighed, 'the beloved, the ever-mourned dead!'

" 'Then, lady, with morning's early dawn I shall depart; and let not the remembrance of Freida cast one shadow over your happiness.'

" 'Why leave without seeing Beauvais,

the friend and reformer of Edrid? I tell you he is worthy to be the minister of Christ, being patient, long-suffering, and merciful. Nay, such is his piety, that he prays for Charles, Count de Valois, the successful enemy of his house.'

" 'True, lady. Nay, more ; and but for those monsters of cruelty, Hubert Clisson and the Père Lagravare, would have saved my son ; and these executioners, self-elected, were Christians !' I spoke these words scornfully and with bitterness. Lady Beatrix gravely replied,—

" 'I at once comprehend your meaning ; for after the terrible fate of the Templar, dark doubts of Christianity, arising from similar causes, gloomed my soul. Ah ! this hopeless darkness of the spirit is more dreadful than any misfortune, while heaven opens in the perspective, illuminating even the tomb with its glorious rays of redemption ! Let me not touch on my grief for D'Auvergne. Prostrate on the altar of Nôtre Dame, I first learned that the cruel sentence of his persecutors had been exe-

cuted. To be brief, some years after I quitted, at the desire of Louis, the Duke of Bavaria, my convent solitude, to take my place in this ancestral palace of the Visconti. It was necessary for Rhodolphe's introduction to the chieftains of our race; and in compliment to D'Auvergne's memory, I threw my portals open to all who had befriended the Templars; and, among others who in disguise fled here from the persecutions of France, was the Bishop of Beauvais. His health suffered from affliction, so I never inquired into the particulars of his brother's death; thus I never heard of Edrid's sad fate. Freida, the prelate's residence here forms a blessed epoch in my fate. No need to trace, step by step, the way by which he won me to a just sense of Christianity, obliging me to uproot many passions, which previously I deemed of slight import. Now,' she exclaimed, 'imperfect as I still am in the eyes of God, I call the Virgin to witness' (she fell on her knees) 'that I would not injure Charles, Count de Valois. May the blessed Saints uphold

him, and win him by grace, to heaven ! And in saying this of him, truly may I add that I am in love and charity with all my species. Freida, say you will be a Christian !' Rising, she embraced me tenderly.

" 'It cannot be,' I replied steadily, but sadly. 'Lady, farewell ; the guests await your presence in the banqueting-hall.'

" 'Have I neglected them, and to no good purpose ?' she anxiously inquired.

* "I felt the blood mount to my face as it drooped on my bosom, and I replied,—

" 'I cannot act the hypocrite by adopting Christianity,—while my present purpose devotes me to the infernal deities.' I did not utter these last words, though they sprang to my lips.

"She said, with a sternness of which one would have supposed her incapable,—

" 'Freida, evil must be the purpose which, with your knowledge of Scriptural truths, urges you on to deny your Saviour the Christ ! Freida, I compassionate your future destiny even more than all you have suffered ; for evil must ever be the result of

passions indulged against religion.' On saying these words, with a grave aspect she retired.

“At a late hour the same evening, again Lady Beatrix summoned me to her presence, and again she strove to win me over to see the prelate, in the anxious hope of my reformation; at the same time obliging me to accept double the quantity of gold I had demanded. Finding that her persuasions were of no avail, although she reiterated her promise of not betraying me, her looks were reproachful, and her adieux coldly proffered. This grieved me much; for, charmed by her kindness, I experienced a warm and sincere affection towards her. Nor did her anger awaken reproach. Well I understood that it emanated from her devotion to the Templar's memory. Of his earthly pollutions my presence was a witness, and believing, as she did, that my adoption of Christianity might at the throne of grace be accepted as a peace-offering for his crime of having lived with a Pagan, she was bitterly grieved at my fixedness of purpose; and I admired,

not condemned, this proof of woman's love.

“With the rising dawn next morning I departed from the hospitable residence of the noble Beatrix. I know not how it is, but ever since her prophetic words, ‘Freida, evil must be the purpose which influences you to deny your Saviour, and evil must be the result,’ have pressed sadly on my spirit; for though the lady’s voice was gentle, her manner was stern. Yet why should I be won by Christians to renounce my just revenge on the murderers of my son—my Edrid?”

NOTES.

*By the assistance of Jacques de Lor the Minister
forms figures, &c.—Vol. ii. p. 125.*

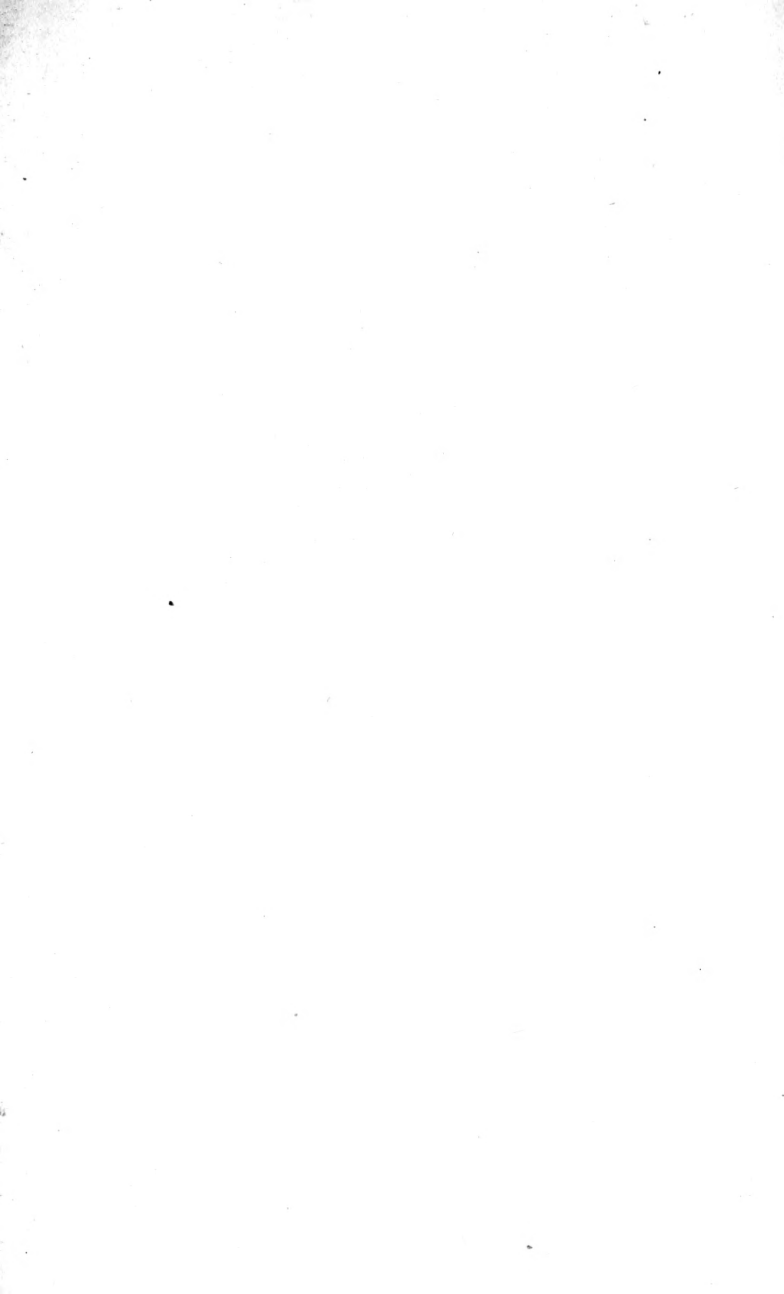
“ Charles De Valois obtint qu’on arrêtât la femme et la sœur de Marigni, et l’on trouva des témoins qui déposèrent qu’à la sollicitation de Marigni, elles avoient employé un magicien, nommé Jacques De Lor, pour attenter sur la vie du Roi par le moien de certaines figures de cire, qu’on prétend être en usage parmi les gens de ce nation, et dont l’effet, dit on, est de faire passer dans les personnes qu’elles représentent. Les opérations magiques qui s’exercent sur les images de sorte que en les piquant ou en les brûlant ces impressions se, si font sentir à celui qu’on veut tourmenter et lui causent enfin la mort. On mit en prison ce prétendu magicien, qui se pendit de désespoir. Cette mort passa pour une conviction de son crime, et sa femme fût brûlée comme complice. Il n’en fallût pas davantage pour rendre Marigni criminal du plus détestable de tous les homicides. Il fut condamné par les commissaires qu’on lui avait choisis exprès à être pendu, nonobstant sa qualité de gentilhomme et de chevalier, et les grands emplois qu’il

avait eus dans l'Etat, et pour pousser l'insulte et la cruauté jusqu'à elle pouvait aller, on fit mettre son corps sur le gibet de Montfaucon, que Marigni avait fait même élever hors de Paris, pour y exposer le corps des malfaiteurs après leur supplice."—*History of France*, par P. G. DANIEL.

The Author is indebted to a poetical friend for the laments and hymns in *this* volume, and takes this opportunity of acknowledging it.

END OF VOL. II.







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